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TAMILAHAM IN THE 17th CENTURY



Sir William Meyer Lectures, 1954-55
University of Madras

TAMILAHAM IN THE 17th CENTURY

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1956

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PREFACE

The lectures published here were delivered in February 1955 in response to the invitation of the University of Madras, dated 10th November 1954, to deliver not less than six lectures before March 1955 under the Sir William Meyer Endowment. In connection with these lectures and their publication my thanks are due to (1) the Founder of the Lectureship, (2) the University of Madras, (3) the Annamalai University, (4) the Editor, Journal of Indian History, (5) the Secretary, All-India Oriental Conference, (6) the Secretary, Indian History Congress, and (7) Messrs. Sri Ramachandra Printing Works.

ANNAMALAINAGAR }
2nd July, 1956. }

R. SATHIANATHAIER

Received from M/S Popular Book Co. for Rs. 5-00

PRINTED AT
SRI RAMACHANDRA PRINTING WORKS,
177, ROYAPETTAH HIGH ROAD, MADRAS-14.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. Bertrand (Father J. Bertrand, *La Mission du Maduré*, 1847, 1848, 1850 & 1854, 4 Vols.)
2. *Further Sources* (K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of Vijayanagara History*, 1946, 3 Vols.)
3. *I. A.* (Indian Antiquary)
4. *J.A.S.B.* (*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*)
5. *J.B.O.R.S.* (*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*)
6. *J.I.H.* (*Journal of Indian History*)
7. *J.M.S.* (*Journal of the Mythic Society*)
8. *M.E.R.* (Madras Epigraphist's Report)
9. *Nayaks* (R. Sathianathaier, *History of the Nayaks of Madura*, 1924)
10. *Sources* (S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Sources of Vijayanagar History*, 1919)
11. *Studies* (N. Venkataramanayya, *Studies in the History of the Third Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, 1935)
12. *T.A.S.* (*Travancore Archaeological Series*)

TAMILAHAM IN THE 17TH CENTURY

CHAPTER I

The Grand Climacteric of Tōpūr

THE CLIMACTERIC OF TĀLIKŌṬA, 1565.

That the battle of Tālikōṭa was fought somewhere near Mudkal and not at Tālikōṭa was known more than one hundred years ago.¹ Though the recent attempt to baptise it as the battle of Rākshasi-Tangadi (names of two villages on the northern bank of the Kṛishṇā) is in the interests of strict historical accuracy, the battle did not actually take place there. Therefore I am inclined to continue the old name of the battle, though Tālikōṭa is twenty-five miles to the north of the Kṛishṇā, because it was the well-known rendezvous of the confederate Muslim forces. Further, the large number of combatants might defeat any attempt at exact location of their engagement; even the most modest reckoning gives 50,000 cavalry and 3000 infantry on the Muslim side, and 70,000 and 90,000 on the Hindu side, besides elephants and artillery. There were also about 6000 Marāṭhā horsemen with the Sultāns. Moreover, we cannot be oblivious of the serious imperfections of the Rāmarāja Bakhar.

The climacteric of Tālikōṭa cannot be properly appreciated without a full knowledge of the political facts and tendencies of the half-century following that battle. It is no longer correct to say that "here (after the battle of Tālikōṭa) my sketch of Vijayanagar history might well end"², and thus began the third (fourth) dynasty, if dynasty it can be appropriately called"³, or

1. J. C. Grant Duff, *A History of the Mahrattas* (1921 edition), I, 62

2. R. Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire* (1924), 209

3. *Ibid.*, 213

TAMILAHAM IN THE 17TH CENTURY

to refer to the "the history which need only be shortly summarised"¹. It is customary to regard Tālikōṭa as the Philippi or Waterloo of the Vijayanagar empire, and it is therefore necessary to estimate rightly the effects of the battle on that empire.

Ferishta observes: "The kingdom of Beejanuggur since this battle has never recovered its ancient splendour². Rāmraj, in the year 972 (A. D. 1564), opposed the kings of the Deccan, and was slain; after which period no such rāja has sat on the throne"³. Thus it is clear that, at the time Ferishta wrote (after 1612), Vijayanagar did not follow the aggressive foreign policy of the hero of Tālikōṭa, who bestrode the narrow Muhammadan world like a colossus and made the Deccan sultāns bow to him in a bondman's key. Further, the extracts given above cannot be taken as evidence for the theory of the independence of the imperial feudatories soon after 1565⁴, as will be shown in the sequel. William Finch, referring to the period 1608-11, notes: "Alongst the seaside toward the Cape is the mightie king of Bezeneger (Vijayanagar), under whom the Portugals hold Saint Thome and Negapatan, but are not suffered to build a castle"⁵. A Jesuit observer wrote in 1583: "In spite of that (the destruction of the city of Vijayanagar) the sovereign of this kingdom was not so shaken that he lost all his power and wealth, because he owns a large state and good many elephants and cavalry and a numerous army."⁶

Let us first analyse the evidence of Ferishta and of another chronicler of his type (the unnamed author of

1. *Ibid.*, 215

2. Briggs, *Ferishta* (R. Cambray & Co.), III, 131

3. *Ibid.*, IV, 552

4. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 209

5. Foster, *Early Travels in India* (1921), 182

6. *Journal of the Mythic Society*, XIV, 131

the *History of Gōlkoṇḍa*)¹, and understand the effects, according to them, of Tālikōṭa on the foreign policy of Vijayanagar. These Muhammadan authorities make us believe very strongly that the post-Tālikōṭa history of Vijayanagar for nearly half a century was not fundamentally different from its history before 1565; parallels in pre-Tālikōṭa history can easily be found to the happenings in the period following Tālikōṭa. The information supplied by them may be arranged under the following heads.

SIEGES OF PENUKONḌA

There were three sieges of Penukoṇḍa by the Muhammadans, all of which had to be raised. In 1577 Alī Ādil Shāh marched to the Hindu capital and blockaded it for three months. Though the Rāya retreated to Chandragiri for the safety of his treasures, his energetic action compelled the Sultān to abandon the siege. According to Ferishta, the cause of the Hindu success was that the fidelity of a chief on the opposite side was corrupted by a bribe of twenty-four lakhs of rupees and five elephants. The Ādil Shāh consequently retired to Bankāpūr and thence to Bijāpūr². In 1579 he besieged Penukoṇḍa again, and his desire "to wrest it out of the hands" of Śrīraṅga I was not fulfilled owing, it is said, to the combination of Vijayanagar and Gōlkoṇḍa armies³. In 1589, after his capture at Gaṇḍikōṭṭa, Muḥammad Kulī Kuṭb Shāh besieged Penukoṇḍa, but the siege had to be raised, thanks to the exertions of Jagadēva Rāya⁴.

1. Briggs, *op. cit.*, III, 337-484

2. *Ibid.*, 141

3. *Ibid.*, 434-35

4. *Ibid.*, 454; S. K. Aiyangar, *Sources of Vijayanagar History*, 1919, 229-30

RAIDS INTO VIJAYANAGAR TERRITORY

In 1593 was made a dash for Mysore, but the Muhammadan army was recalled consequent on the rebellion of Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II's brother.¹ In 1589 had happened the counter-raid into Udayagiri territory by Afzal Khān, the Gōlkoṇḍa governor of Koṇḍavīḍu, and the plundering expedition to Kāḷahasti.²

MUHAMMADAN ESTIMATE OF THE
POWER OF VIJAYANAGAR

This is clear from the desire of the Sultāns to make alliances with Vijayanagar, from their undertaking campaigns against the latter after a combination among themselves, and from the flight of Muhammadan rebels to the Hindu capital. In 1566 was made a joint request to Tirumala by the Sultāns of Aḥmadnagar and Gōlkoṇḍa for help against Bijāpūr, but Aḥmadnagar's demand of two lakhs of *huns* from Tirumala angered him and called forth the disapprobation of Gōlkoṇḍa, which remonstrated against that astonishing requisition and emphasised the necessity of conciliating a useful ally. When that demand was however reiterated, Tirumala refused it and treated Aḥmadnagar as his enemy. These negotiations, though abortive, throw some light on the position of Tirumala in the year following the battle at Tālikōṭa.³ In 1594 Burhān Nizām Shāh concluded an alliance with Venkaṭa I against Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II.⁴ But it should not be forgotten that Tirumala forced the Ādil Shāh to retreat from Ānegundi in 1566 by a successful appeal to Aḥmadnagar⁵, and that in 1579

1. Briggs, *op.cit.*, III, 176

2. *Ibid.*, 455 & 460

3. *Ibid.*, 418-20

4. *Ibid.*, 183, 184 & 286

5. *Ibid.*, 251

Srīraṅga compelled Bijāpūr to raise the siege of Penukoṇḍa with the help of Gōlkoṇḍa¹. Though the capture of Ādōni in 1568 substantially increased the military reputation of Alī Ādil Shāh, he deemed it hazardous to extend his conquests southward without the help of allies and made an alliance with the Nizām Shāh². In 1572 another alliance was concluded between Bijāpūr and Aḥmadnagar, defining their respective spheres of aggression³. Between 1580 and 1589 a treaty of perpetual amity and friendship was made by Bijāpūr with Gōlkoṇḍa which was cemented by a matrimonial alliance with the object of maintaining their conquests intact⁴. Lastly, we are told that "it had been always an understood principle with the Mahomedan kings of the Deccan not to invade the Beejanuggur territories without the general consent of the whole"⁵. Further, the chiefs disloyal to the Sultāns hoped for and obtained help from Vijayanagar. Soon after the accession of Ibrāhīm Ādil Shāh II in 1580, some of his nobles, who did not like his minister, thought of maturing their plot against the latter in the Hindu capital.⁶ About 1592 a plot against the Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa was organised at Penukoṇḍa⁷. The other features of the Hindu conflict with the Muhammadans, such as the aggressions of Vijayanagar, will be considered below.

The sieges of Penukoṇḍa and their failure remind us of the attempts against the imperial city under the Sangamas. The attack on Kālahasti is reminiscent of that on

1. *Ibid.*, 434-35

2. *Ibid.*, 135

3. *Ibid.*, 254-55

4. *Ibid.*, 451

5. *Ibid.*, 435

6. Briggs, *op.cit.*, 147

7. *Ibid.*, 462-63

Kāñchi in 1481. The so-called flights and apologies of Veṅkaṭa I (not II, as Achyuta Rāya's son called Veṅkaṭa I by some scholars was named Veṅkaṭādri) are similiar to those of Bukka I and Saḷuva Narasimha; the victories of Islam are like those of earlier times. In spite of such obvious exaggerations, the strength of the Vijayanagar empire emerges clearly from the aggressions of Veṅkaṭa I and the revolts of chiefs against the Sultāns, some of which were instigated by him and his predecessors. Apart from the victories claimed for the emperors of Vijayanagar in their inscriptions and in Hindu literature, the Muhammadan authorities mention the numerical superiority of the Hindus, with the result that the Muhammadans "found it impossible to give them battle."¹ Moreover, the heavy losses sustained by them are sometimes recorded². It is too much to expect a clearer account of the strength of Vijayanagar from chroniclers like Ferishta. But the abandonment of the city of Vijayanagar and the concentration on Penukonda pushed the zone of war southward, and the old importance of the Rāichūr Dōāb was transferred to the southern side of the Tuṅgabhadra line, though not immediately after Tālikōṭa.

HINDU LITERATURE

Tirumala's victories over the Sultāns are recorded in two Telugu works, the *Rāmarājīyam* of Veṅkaiya and the *Vasucharitram* of Bhaṭṭu Mūrti; the latter authority mentions three defeats sustained by the Nizām Shāh and other Sultāns, one of which was at Penukonda and another near the Kṛishṇā, with the result that the enemies were expelled beyond that

1. *Ibid.*, 456

2. *Ibid.*, 459

river¹. The *Rāmarājīyamu* says that Śrīraṅga Rāya invaded the territories of Bijāpūr, Aḥmadnagar and Gōlkoṇḍa and "resuscitated the glory of the Karnāṭa empire which had waned". A victory over the Nizām Shāh is claimed for Rāma, his younger brother². The *Lakshmīvilāsam* of Rāyasam Veṅkaṭapati records that Śrīraṅga defeated "the large armies of the Kuṭb Shāh and captured his royal insignia"³. We find however the *Annals of Handē Anantāpuram* mentioning, after Śrīraṅga's successful attack on Kalyāṇi and Kulburga, a counter-invasion by the Sultāns which ended in the defeat and imprisonment of the emperor of Vijayanagar and in their conquest and administration of "the whole country north of Penukoṇḍa"⁴. But it must be noted that the account apparently gives a defence of Handē Malakappa Nāyudu's opportunism, and it is not easy to determine whether we have not here an instance of local patriotism falsifying history. The unnamed Muhammadan chronicler refers to "Kupoory Timrāj, son-in-law of the celebrated Rāmraj" becoming a prisoner of the Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa in 1579, but not to the imprisonment of the emperor Śrīraṅga.⁵ Moreover, Ferishta says nothing in support of the statement of the *Annals*. Lastly, the imprisonment of Śrīraṅga is ascribed to the period between the cyclic years Manmatha and Vikāri (1595-96 & 1599-1600). So the reference cannot be to Śrīraṅga I, the predecessor of Veṅkaṭa I. The *Yayāti-charitramu* mentions the conclusion of a treaty between Śrīraṅga and the Kuṭb Shāh in consequence of the former's interview with the latter. Though that work was dedicated to a Muhammadan chief in the service of Gōlkoṇḍa, there is no reference in it to the im-

1. *Sources*, 213 & 216

2. *Ibid.*, 213

3. *Ibid.*, 230

4. *Ibid.*, 231-32

5. Briggs, *op. cit.*, 437-38

prisonment of Śrīraṅga¹. According to the *Rāmarājīyam*, Veṅkaṭa inflicted a bloody defeat on the Kuṭb Shāh on the banks of the Peṇṇār and fixed the Kṛishṇā as the boundary between the two kingdoms². The *Raghunāthā-bhyudaya* of Rāmabhadraṁbā refers to the services of the Tanjore ruler, Raghunātha, to Veṅkaṭa in defeating the Muhammadans³.

INSCRIPTIONS

Śrīraṅga's Kṛishṇāpuram copper plates of 1575-76 mention his conquest of Koṇḍaviḍu, Vinukoṇḍa, Udayagiri and other forts⁴. His inscription of 1576 refers to his residence at Udayagiri and records his conquest of the inaccessible fortress of Koṇḍaviḍu⁵. Another record of the same year (Dhātu, Amṛitalūr, Guntur) states the remission of taxes on merchants, weavers and others, "on account of a plunder suffered by the people"⁶. In 1577 and 1583 Śrīraṅga claims to have taken all countries and received tribute from Ceylon⁷. His Ahōbālam inscription of 1584-85 says that in Bahudānya (1578-79) he defeated the Kuṭb Shāh⁸. The Aminābād inscription of Amin-ul-Mulk, dated 1592-93, enumerates the Kuṭb Shāh's conquests from Vijayanagar in 1580 and says that he was ruling over the Koṇḍaviḍu province⁹. In 1592 and 1609 Veṅkaṭa I claims to have levied tribute from all countries including Ceylon¹⁰. The Siddhout inscription of 1605 mentions the defeat of the Muhammadans by Veṅkaṭa at Penukoṇḍa¹¹.

1. *Sources*, 236

2. *Ibid.*, 243

3. *Ibid.*, 285

4. *E. I.*, XI, 326-36

5. C.P. No. 23 of 1911

6. 629 of 1920

7. 134 & 128 of 1918

8. *Sources*, 233-34

9. *Ibid.*, 239-40

10. 208 of 1916 & 92 of 1923

11. 564 of 1915; *Sources*, 248-49

The relations of the empire of Vijayanagar with the Deccan sultanates indicated by the evidences detailed above show that, after the battle of Tālikōṭa, foreign policy was conducted by the Rāyas vigorously, even with credit, with this difference that the debatable land was no longer the Rāichūr Dōāb, but the region to the south of it along the Tuṅgabhadra-Kṛishṇā line. Two other features of the history of Vijayanagar during the half-century following Tālikōṭa which deserve consideration are the extent and time of Vijayanagar's territorial losses in the north and the internal condition of the empire.

TERRITORIAL LOSSES

Immediately after Tālikōṭa the chief trans-Tuṅgabhadra-Kṛishṇā acquisitions of Rāmarāja, viz., Rāichūr and Mudkal, and "all the districts which had been taken from Ibrāhīm Kooṭb Shāh in the reign of Rāmarāj" are said to have been seized by the Sultāns.¹ In 1568 Ādōni was captured by Alī Ādil Shāh after "several indecisive actions."² In 1573 Dhārwar and Bankāpūr fell after a resistance to him for six and fifteen months respectively.³ The succeeding years up to 1577-78 witnessed the capture and re-fortification of Chandragutti and the subjugation of some of the chiefs of Malabar and the settlement of the new conquests in that region.⁴ Till 1579 Gōlkoṇḍa was engaged in the reduction of Rājamahēndri and places to the north of it. It was in that year that the conquest of the Cis-Kṛishṇā territories of Vijayanagar in the east began, the immediate cause of it being the attack on Koṇḍapalli

1. Briggs, *op. cit.*, 415

2. *Ibid.*, 134

3. *Ibid.*, 135-38

4. *Ibid.*, 139-41

by some "Hindu Chiefs." Haidar-ul-Mulk reduced Vinukonda, Cumbum, and Bellamkonda and laid siege to Konḍaviḍu, which surrendered, after a protracted siege, to Haidar's successor, Shāh Mir, with the result that Gōlkonḍa acquired the province of Konḍaviḍu, "including two or three sea-ports."¹ This was followed a decade after (in 1589) by the capture of Nandyāl, Kurnool (?), and Gaṇḍikōṭṭa. "Most of the petty rājas of Beejanuggur had now bent their necks to the Muhammadan yoke."² Thus the whole of the Guntur district and parts of the Bellary, Cuddapah and Nellore districts, as well as parts of the west coast, passed on to the Muhammadans. There is no doubt that by 1580 Vijayanagar had lost the whole of the Guntur district; there are found in it thirteen inscriptions (Madras collection) of Śrīraṅga ranging from 1572 to 1580 and none after the latter year during the period under survey, but such is not the case in the other districts, where inscriptions of later years are found: in Bellary up to 1592 and in Cuddapah, Kurnool and Nellore up to 1614. So the Muhammadan conquest and government of "the whole country north of Penukonda", recorded in the *Annals of Hanḍē Anantāpuram*, cannot be accepted.³ But the above-mentioned conquests must be viewed in the light of the frequent revolts of Hindu and other chiefs against Muhammadan authority, sometimes instigated by Vijayanagar, and the attempts of the latter to recover them.

REVOLTS AGAINST BIJĀPŪR AND GŌLKOṆḌA

Ghalib Khān, Governor of Ādōni, revolted in 1584.⁴ In the same year the chiefs of Malabar refused to pay tribute, and an expedition under Bulāl Khan was sent

1. *Ibid.*, 436-38

2. *Ibid.*, 453-54

3. *Sources*, 232

4. Briggs, *op. cit.*, 157

against them. His failure, imprisonment and escape were followed by the refusal of the Regent of Bijāpūr to direct his attention at once to that quarter.¹ A second expedition under the same general was despatched in 1587, but he was soon recalled.² Another effort in 1593 fared no better owing to the rebellion of the Sultān's brother at Belgaum which resulted in the attack on Bankāpūr by the chiefs of Malabar.³ "The Zamindars throughout the kingdom of Beejapoor were ripe for revolt".⁴ In 1595 Bijāpūr was about to lose Ādōni.⁵ In 1580 Alī Khān marched into the province of Koṇḍaviḍu, besieged Cumbum, ravaged Koṇḍapalli, and attacked Nizāmpaṭam, but was finally killed.⁶ The Amīnābād inscription of Amīn-ul-Mulk, dated 1592-93, mentions the revolt of some Hindu and Muhammadan chiefs against the Sultān in the cyclic year Khara (1591-92) and their capture of the Koṇḍaviḍu district. The rebellion was put down by that general.⁷ The Muhammadan chronicler describes the revolt of three *jāghīrdārs*, a Muhammadan and two Hindus, their refusal to pay tribute to the Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa, and their plunder of his country near Koṇḍaviḍu, with the result that Amīn-ul-Mulk conducted a successful expedition, but the rebels joined Vijayanagar.⁸

VENKATA'S ACTIVITIES

In 1589 Venkata invaded Gōlkoṇḍa, and the subsequent siege of Penukoṇḍa by the latter had to be abandoned. He followed up his success by ravaging the

1. *Ibid.*, 157-58

2. *Ibid.*, 160-61

3. *Ibid.*, 175-76

4. *Ibid.*, 183

5. *Ibid.*, 187

6. *Ibid.*, 448-50

7. *Sources*, 240

8. Briggs, *op. cit.*, 460-61

province of Koṇḍaviḍu and attempting to recover Gaṇḍikōṭṭa from Sunjūr Khān. The Muhammadan chronicler notes Veṅkaṭa's initial failure on the battlefield, but the siege of Gaṇḍikōṭṭa was carried on for three months. The Hindu forces became so numerous that two Muhammadan armies "found it impossible to give them battle, but confined their operations to plundering and cutting off supplies." The Muhammadans became panic-stricken at the sight of "a red bullock" driven into their ranks by the enemies. The Hindus took advantage of the situation and attacked the Muhammadans, who escaped total destruction by retreating, but sustained heavy losses, with the result that Rustam Khān was "disgraced, on his return to Hyderabad, by being dressed in female attire, after which he was banished from the kingdom", and that the Sultān resolved to attack Penukoṇḍa and "to lay in ashes all the enemy's towns in his route." In the subsequent invasion the idols of Kālahasti were destroyed, and Muhammadan prayers were read in the temples of that town. "These edifices may well be compared in magnificence with the buildings and paintings of China, with which they vie in beauty and workmanship." Though the Muhammadan chronicler says that his co-religionists carried on war for several years south of the Kṛishṇā, he does not record any further substantial results. These events happened in 1591 before Amīn-ul-Mulk's expedition.¹ Veṅkaṭa marched a second time to Koṇḍaviḍu in order to recover Guntur between 1591 and 1603 with an army of "two hundred thousand horse and infantry and one thousand elephants", but no battle was fought, and he submitted to the Sultān, confessing that the real object of his presence in that region was to see and

1. *Ibid.*, 454-60

perform ablutions in the lake at Cumbum, according to the Muhammadan chronicler.¹ The only reasonable conclusion from all this evidence appears to be that South India between north latitudes fifteen and sixteen became the bone of contention between Vijayanagar and the Deccan Sultāns and played the part that the Rāichūr Dōāb had played in earlier times. No doubt the territories on both sides of that region became the theatre of predatory warfare now and then.

REVOLT OF VIJAYANAGAR FEUDATORIES

Ferishta says: "The country (Vijayanagar empire) has been seized on by the tributary chiefs, each of whom hath assumed an independent power in his own district."² This statement is generally taken to support the view that the feudatories of Vijayanagar became independent soon after Tālikōṭa, but the reference of Ferishta is clearly to the time when he wrote (after 1612). But his account of the fortunes of Vijayanagar after Tālikōṭa does not substantiate that view as it mentions the revolt specifically of two chiefs, who belonged to the northern frontier. Ādōni came under a principal officer of Rāmarāja after his death, and it was that independent chief who came into conflict with Alī Ādil Shāh in 1568.³ The chief of Dhārwar, originally another officer of Rāmarāja, paid an annual tribute to Tirumala till his own subjugation by the Ādil Shāh in 1573.⁴ The ruler of Bankāpūr, another assistant of Rāmarāja, became independent after his master's death, but appealed to Tirumala against the Ādil Shāh in the same year. According to Ferishta, the Rāya gave the following reply to that appeal: "By his wickedness

1. *Ibid.*, 466-67

2. *Ibid.*, 131

3. *Ibid.*, 134

4. *Ibid.*, 135

and evil example most of the dependents on his house had become rebels and departed from their duty, so that it was with difficulty he could support himself at Penukonda and Chundergeery. He promised (however) to issue his orders to all his vassals to assist him, though he could not rely on their obedience."¹ But Ferishta does not mention the revolt of any of the major feudatories of the empire, but rests content with naming two minor chiefs, without substantiating the weighty words he puts into the mouth of Tirumala. The unnamed Muhammadan chronicler says that "most of the petty rājas of Beejanuggur had now (1589) bent their necks to the Mahomedan yoke."² Moreover, Ferishta does not make clear whether all the chiefs conquered by the Sultāns could be regarded as disloyal to Vijayanagar.

It is believed that the battle of Tālikōṭa straightway converted Madura into a potential rebel praying for imperial misfortunes. Her alleged disloyalty is sometimes contrasted with the conspicuous and admirable loyalty of Tanjore and with the less noisy but none the less substantial goodwill of Mysore towards the empire. But the literature produced at the Tanjore and Mysore courts, breathing sentiments of profound loyalty, has not received the much-needed corrective of Madura literature. We are unhappy that Nilakanṭha Dikshita and others at Maḍura did not turn their attention to historical *praśastis*. Moreover, the Jesuit writers say that Mysore was the first rebel against the empire of Vijayanagar, that Madura followed her example in the time of Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka I (1609-C 27),³ and that in 1611 the Nāyaks of Madura, Tanjore and Jiñji, all of them were unpunctual in the payment of their tribute and

1. *Ibid.*, 136-37

2. *Ibid.*, 453

3. Bertrand, *La Mission du Madure*, III, 42

sometimes insolently refused it.¹ That Madura was no *sui generis* is abundantly clear. We shall examine the case of Madura below in the light of the recent theories.

There is no satisfactory evidence to hold that the battle of Tālikōṭa reduced the Vijayanagar empire, "so solid and compact" to a number of warring atoms, and introduced "a state of anarchy."² Further, it is necessary to avoid the fallacy of "After Tālikōṭa, therefore because of Tālikōṭa". The occasional expression of feudatory restlessness and even disloyalty may be better ascribed to the murder of Sadāśiva Rāya by Tirumala's son, noted by Caesar Frederick—and there is no reason to doubt the statement³—than to the battle of Tālikōṭa. Tirumala's difficulties could be understood in that light. His attempt to repopulate the capital⁴ shows that he was not as demoralised as might be supposed by the great defeat. This is perhaps in harmony with Caesar Frederick's observation that Rāmarāja was betrayed into the hands of his enemies by his two trusted Muhammadan lieutenants.⁵ Tirumala probably thought that the effects of treachery could be undone. The Italian traveller's references to the unwillingness of the barons and nobles to acquiesce in the usurpation of Tirumala and to the consequent existence of "many kings and great division" in the empire are descriptive of the first effects of the shock of Sadāśiva Rāya's murder, which is put down by the same authority as the primary cause of the empire's troubles.⁶

1. *Ibid.*, II, 124

2. Sowell, *op. cit.*, 209

3. *Hakluyt's Voyages* (Everyman's Library), III, 216

4. *Ibid.*, 213

5. *Ibid.*, 212

6. *Ibid.*, 216

CONCLUSION

The battle of Tālikōṭa was undoubtedly the climacteric of the Vijayanagar empire. It resulted in the abandonment of the imperial capital and in the loss of the Rāichūr Dōāb, and the zone of Hindu - Muhammadan conflicts was ultimately pushed one degree of latitude southward. The *Rāmarājīyamu's* reference to Śrīraṅga's restoration of the waning glories of the empire reminds us of the difficulties of Tirumala, which must have been caused in a large measure by the folly of Sadāśiva Rāya's murder. Tirumala must have been confronted with the troubles incident to usurpers, which were perhaps intensified by their occurrence shortly after the battle of Tālikōṭa. The decisive success of Kṛishṇadēva Rāya and the plenitude of the ubiquitous Rāmarāja's dictatorial might were gone beyond recall. But for nearly half a century after Tālikōṭa, the imperial authority, owing to the exertions of Tirumala, Śrīraṅga I and Veṅkaṭa I, the last in particular, was a living and potent force in South Indian politics, and anti-Muhammadan resistance was offered effectively and even creditably, thus the empire continuing to render to South India the great services, political and cultural, associated with the other dynasties of Vijayanagar. But some of the results of Tālikōṭa could not be undone. The glorious capital was irretrievably lost, and the door was opened to the penetration of the Muhammadans farther south. Though the power and prestige of the empire suffered some diminution, yet an almost equal struggle was carried on with the Muhammadan states, and provincial insubordination exhibited itself with potency only after the death of Veṅkaṭa I. Tālikōṭa was the climacteric, but not the grand climacteric, of the Vijayanagar empire.¹

1. *JIH*, April, 1927, 78-89

The above remark on provincial insubordination is characterised by a well-known British historian as "a view which agrees substantially with Methwold's statement."¹ My opinion regarding the rehabilitation of the empire by Veṅkaṭa I is endorsed by a scholar who says that Veṅkaṭa "laboured incessantly not only to maintain the integrity of the empire but to revive some of its former glory, a task which was by no means easy of performance.....He succeeded in restoring to the royal power much of its old vigour and independence. During the period of his reign the glory of the old empire which seems to have faded on the battle-field of Rākṣasi-Tangadi shone again brilliantly;"² and by another scholar who refers to Veṅkaṭa as "the most illustrious and beyond doubt the most powerful King of the Āraṇḍu dynasty"³ and to his successful foreign and domestic policy.

SADĀŚIVA RĀYA'S MURDER, 1567

Caesar Frederick attributes the troubles and tribulations of the Vijayanagar empire after Tālikōṭa primarily to the murder of Sadāśiva Rāya by one of the sons of Tirumala. This statement is generally accepted. It is said that Veṅkaṭa I was Sadāśiva's jailor and murderer.⁴ "There is now little doubt that the murder of Sadāśiva was committed by him. The imprisonment of this unfortunate sovereign by Rāma Rāya might be in some way justified, but his assassination cannot be vindicated, by either private morality or public policy."⁵ But we are told that the definite statement of Caesar Frederick

1. W. H. Moreland, *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century* (1931), 2 f.n. 5

2. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of Vijayanagara History* (1946), I, 325

3. H. Heras, *The Aravindu Dynasty of Vijayanagara* (1927), 510-11

4. *Ibid.*, 245-46

5. *Ibid.*, 511-12

may be rejected on the following grounds: the village *kaifiyats* agree that Sadāśiva ruled for six years after Talikōṭa; inscriptions indicate that he reigned up to 1576; Sadāśiva was too docile to cause anxiety to Tirumala; therefore the Italian traveller must have obtained false information. Nay more, "there is reason to believe that the Nāyaks who were desirous of repudiating Tirumala's authority purposely spread a false rumour to create disaffection in the minds of the people against him.....Since Sadāśiva was alive until A.D. 1576, the rumour of his assassination must have been spread by interested people who stood to gain by discrediting Tirumala and his family."¹ To reject the specific statement of Caesar Frederick better evidence is called for than this kind of speculation based on *kaifiyats* and inscriptions, which may give quite antiquated information. To take one example, there are inscriptions making Śrīraṅga III alive after 1672, the date mentioned for his death in the Fort St. George records. The docility of Sadāśiva could not prevent murder for usurpation. To make the Nāyaks black beasts is merely to give the dog a bad name and hang him. Therefore the statement of Caesar Frederick stands, and Venkaṭa I murdered Sadāśiva. But a point which has been overlooked is that Venkaṭa (who died in 1614 at the age of 67)² was only twenty years old in 1567, and therefore he could be regarded only as an instrument of his father's atrocious resolve.

DISLOYALTY OF MADURA: KRISHNAPPA NĀYAKA'S USURPATION

The new theory of the usurpation of Krishnappa Nāyaka I (1564-72) may be stated in the words of its author: "There is absolutely nothing to indicate that

1. *Further Sources*, I, 299-300

2. *Sewell, op. cit.*, 224

either Viśwanātha or his son Kṛṣṇappa was anything but an ordinary *amaranāyaka* until A.D. 1564. The statement found in the chronicles that Kṛṣṇadēva or Acyuta crowned Viśwanātha as the king of Madura is not based upon facts. They are fabrications of later ages intended to throw a veil of legality over a treacherous and rebellious act. The truth appears to be that Kṛṣṇappa, taking advantage of the confusion caused by the disastrous battle of Tālikōṭa, seized the province of Madura and declared himself to be its ruler. And the imperial government had neither strength nor time to prevent the usurpation of regal power by Kṛṣṇappa. Tirumala had probably to recognise the position which Kṛṣṇappa had claimed, in order to prevent the empire from falling to pieces. This seems to be the way in which the Nāyak Kingdom of Madura had originated."¹ Having bastardised the chronicles which say that the Nāyakship of Madura was founded in the reign of Kṛṣṇadēva Rāya or Achyuta Rāya, the author emphasises the statement of Nuniz that, after the death of Kṛṣṇadēva Rāya, "Salvanay" became minister till Achyuta came from the fortress of Chandragiri, where he had been detained,² and that "Salvanayque" was lord of Coromandel, which included the cities of Negapatam, Tanjore and other cities including "Caullim"³, which is identified by the author with Kāyal, though he has already identified "Catur" with Kayal.⁴ It is argued that the stop-gap minister it was that held the lordship of the Coromandel coast as far south as Tinnevely, not Viśvanātha Nāyaka, who is not mentioned at all by Nuniz in his list of *amaranāyakas*; therefore the Nāyakship of Madura did

1. N. Venkataramanayya, *Studies in the History of the Third Dynasty of Vijayanagara* (1935), 461

2. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 367

3. *Ibid.*, 384-85

4. *Studies*, 447-52

not exist during his time. But we answer that the stop-gap arrangement need not disturb us at all and that the silence of Nuniz need not be underlined as he mentions the names of only ten of the more than two hundred captains of the empire. The author remarks that Nuniz must have visited Vijayanagar more than once between 1520 and 1540.¹ We are not aware of the exact period to which his statements refer and the exact source of his information. In this case the argument from silence is weak. Moreover, the author himself says that "the assignment of large tracts of country to his noblemen is against the spirit of Kṛṣṇarāya's policy. He declares in his *Amuktamālyada* that a king who assigns lands to his nobles without transgressing the limits of moderation lives in peace. It is not credible that he had assigned to Viśvanātha more than a third of his kingdom, however loyal he might have been."² Do not these remarks apply to the statement of Nuniz regarding "Salvanayque's" lordship of the Coromandel? It is said that Rājanātha Diṇḍima, author of the *Achyutarāyābhyudaya* and poet-laureate of Achyuta, makes Sellappa ruler of the Chola country, but this cannot affect Viśvanātha's position in the Pāṇḍya country. Moreover, we find Rājanātha assigned to A.D. 1595.³ As regards the chronicles attributing the foundation of the Nāyakship of Madura to Kṛishṇadēva or Achyuta, there is no difficulty, because the work of the one might well have been continued by the other; a difficulty will arise only if the name of some predecessor of Kṛishṇadēva had been mentioned in lieu of Achyuta's; in this hypothetical case there would be difficulty in placing the origin of the Nāyakship of Madura in the reign of Kṛishṇadēva Rāya.

1. *Ibid.*, XXVI

2. *Further Sources*, 240

3. *Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume* (1936), 183

Our author exhibits some faith in the *Maduraittalavaralāru*¹: "According to this work, Viśvanātha was one of the governors that ruled at Madura before 1559 A.D.; his tenure of office was not continuous, as the period of his rule over Madura is divided into three periods, each period being separated by a fairly long interval."² The three periods are as follows: 1533-42; 1544-45; and 1559-72, the interval being fairly long only in one case. It is admitted by our author that, "in the light of available epigraphical evidence, it may be said that Viśvanātha might have held the governorship of Madura from 1532 to 1538."³ The first interval in question may be explained by assuming that Viśvanātha was absent from Madura on other imperial duty and that the chronicle merely mentions the names of his deputies. As regards the longer interval, the *Maduraittalavaralāru* assigns the period 1546-57 to Rāmarāja Viṭṭhalarāja, whose superior position did not nullify Viśvanātha's governorship of Madura. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that his rule was continuous from 1532.

The statement of the *Maduraittalavaralāru* that twenty-seven persons ruled in Madura from 1324 to 1563 is interpreted as follows: "A.D 1563 marks the end of one period and the commencement of another."⁴ In support of this view is quoted an inscription of 1563, which is a record of Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka I for the merit of his father Viśvanātha. But the cyclic year mentioned—Krōdhana—corresponds to 1565⁵, though Śāka 1485 is A.D. 1563. The general tendency to prefer the Śāka date to the cyclic year when the two do not agree

1. R. Sathianathan, *History of the Nayaks of Madura* (1924), 373-84

2. *Studies*, 457

3. *Ibid.*, 458

4. *Ibid.*, 460

5. *Nayaks*, 340

cannot be approved, because the latter was more frequently used not only in official documents but also in the every-day transactions of life among the Hindus. Moreover, the *Maduraittalavaralāru* states, immediately after mentioning twenty-seven persons ruling from 1324 to 1563, that Viśvanātha Nāyaka ruled for twelve years from A.D. 1560 to 1572. Still it is contended that "1560 A.D. may be taken as the last year of the actual rule of Viśvanātha."¹ This contention is intended to prepare the ground for the supposed usurpation of Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka after 1565. So far it is clear that Viśvanātha was no ordinary *amaranāyaka* but one who was in power in Madura for a long period, for 23 years, according to the chronicle in question.

The real problem is the origin, not of the Nāyaka kingdom (implying independence), but of the Nāyakship, governorship or viceroyalty of Viśvanātha. It is going too far to stigmatise the chronicles as the fabrications of a later age; have they fabricated even the name of Viśvanātha Nāyaka? It is strange that our author bypasses the important, nay fundamental, issue of Nāgama Nāyaka, father of Viśvanātha. Is Nāgama a figment of the chronicler's imagination? No, he is mentioned in inscriptions of 1475, 1482, 1483 and 1484 and in the last record as the foremost servant of Sāḷuva Narasimha. Assuming that he attained that position at the age of 30 years, he would be about 75 towards the close of Kṛishṇadēva Rāya's reign, beyond which we cannot take Nāgama's revolt, and the crux of the question of the foundation of the Nāyakship of Madura is that Nāgama's revolt and his son Viśvanātha's viceroyalty are too closely associated in tradition to be doubted at least in the present state of our epigraphical and historical knowledge. All that we know of Viśvanātha

from inscriptions, chronicles and other sources confirms our view that the Nāyakship of Madura was a *fait accompli* before the death of "the gallant and perfect" Rāya.¹ This view is confirmed by John Nieuhoff who states that by 1533 the Nāyak of Madura had "found means to get into possession of this country."² Still it is asserted that "the Nāyak kingdom of Madura was founded not by Viśwanātha Nāyaka but by his son Kṛṣṇappa."³ As against the *ipse dixit* that Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka usurped power in Madura after Tālikōṭa, we may point out that, to Rāmarāja's appeal for help according to Ferishta, there was response from Madura, and the Daḷavāy-Pradhāni Ariyanātha proceeded northward. Though we do not know the role of Tanjore in this connection, her loyalty is vouched for by an inscription⁴ in Tamil dated Akshaya, Tai, 15 (January, 1567) on a slab near the Pāsupatēśvara temple at Tiruvēṭkaḷam (Annamalainagar, South Arcot District), recording the gift of the village of Tiruvēshkaḷam to the Chidambareśvara temple by the crown prince Achyutappa Nāyaka of Tanjore for the merit of Tirumala of Vijayanagar. Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka had distinguished himself in public affairs during the regime of his father, Viśvanātha; his loyalty is proved by the Kṛṣṇāpuram Plates⁵ of Sadāśiva Rāya, 1567, which describe him as one "who knew the truth about duty" and which mention his titles indicative of his share in the campaigns against Travancore during the period of Achyuta and Rāmarāja Viṭṭhala. In short, Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka was no Lord High Seditioner.

In a work published a few months ago (1954) we find support accorded to the view that the Nāyakship of

1. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 247

2. *Nayaks*, 47 & 329

3. *Further Sources*, I, 241

4. 259 of 1913

5. B. I., IX, 328-42

Madura was founded after the battle of Tālikōṭa. A palm-leaf document from the temple of Vēdānārāyaṇapperumāḷ at the village of Tirunārāyaṇapuram (Musiri Taluk, Trichinopoly District) registers a grant of land to the temple by Vijaya Raṅga Kṛishṇa Muttu Virappa Chokkanātha Nāyaka of Madura in Ś 1619, Kali 4797, Bahudānya, Tai, etc. As the Śaka and Kali years do not tally, the editor of the record says that "the intended date is evidently A.D. 1699, January 6 with the Śaka year 1620 and the Kali year 4799."¹ Maṅgammāl was Regent (1689-1706) for Vijaya Raṅga Chokkanātha (1706-32). The preamble to the grant gives the following list of the rulers of Vijayanagar and Madura. *Vijayanagar*: 1. Praudhadēva Mahārāya, 2. Mallikārjuna Rāya, 3. Achyuta Rāya, 4. Kṛishṇa Rāya, 5. Śrīraṅga, and 6. Rāmadēva Mahārāya. *Madura*: 1. Nāgama Nāyaka, 2. Viśvanātha Nāyaka, 3. Periya Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka, 4. Periya Virappa Nāyaka, 5. Kumāra Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka, 6. Kastūri Raṅgappa Nāyaka, 7. Muttu Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka, 8. Periya Muttu Virappa Nāyaka, 9. Tirumalai Nāyaka, 10. Muttu Virappa Nāyaka, 11. Chokkanātha Nāyaka, 12. Śrī Raṅga Kṛishṇa Muttu Virappa Nāyaka, 13. Śrī Maṅgammāl, and 14. Śrī Vijaya Raṅga Kṛishṇa Muttu Virappa Chokkanātha Nāyaka, the donor of the grant. The editor observes: "It is to be noted that the list of kings who ruled at Vijayanagar stops with Rāmadēva Mahārāya who ruled one and a half centuries earlier and died in the beginning of A.D. 1565 in the great battle of Rākshasi-Tangadi and that the list of the Madurai Nāyaka rulers is introduced here as *rāya(r)rāṇuvakkāriyattukkukartarāna* (Nāgama Nāyaka, etc.), the military officer of the king. This in a way supports the view that the Madurai Nāyaka kingdom came into existence only

1. *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, II, edited by T. N. Subramaniam (1954), 754

after the battle of Rākshasi-Tangaḍi.”¹ He identifies No. 6 Rāmadēva Mahārāya with Rāmarāja, the *de facto* ruler of Vijayanagar and sets aside No. 5 Śrīraṅga, who came after Tālikōṭa. But Rāmadēva Mahārāya is obviously the king who reigned from 1617 to 1630. The posteriority of Kṛishṇadēva Rāya to Achyuta Rāya in the above list may be regarded as an error of the writer of the record. Above all, Nāgama Nāyaka is the first on the Madura list, and this goes against the Editor’s view. How can he accommodate Nāgama after Tālikōṭa? In fact, the present record in a way confirms the view that the Nāyakship of Madura was founded in the period of Nāgama Nāyaka.

DISLOYALTY OF MADURA: REVOLT OF VIRAPPA NĀYAKA

According to the *Chikkadēvarāya Vamsāvatī* of Tirumalāya, Prime Minister of Chikkadēva Rāya (1672-1704), Veṅkaṭa I was involved in a war with Virappa Nāyaka, and Madura was besieged by the imperial army under his nephew Tirumala, who however received a bribe from the Nāyaka and retired to his viceroyalty of Seringapatam, with the result that Rāja Uḍaiyār decided to seize the viceroyalty.² But we are not sure whether the reference is to Virappa Nāyaka (1572-95) or to his great grandson, Muttuvirappa Nāyaka I (1609-1627). The latter possibility is indicated by Rāja Uḍaiyār’s seizure of Seringapatam in 1610 and by the ideas of independence cherished by Muttuvirappa beyond a shadow of doubt. Secondly, the Siddhout inscription of Maṭṭa Ananta, 1605, enumerating his achievements, says that he “led the campaign against the Drāviḍa king of Madura.”³ But the staunch imperialist Ananta is said to have “protected the flying armies of the

1. *Ibid.*, 755

2. *Sources*, 302-3

3. *M.E.R.*, 1916, 148

Madura chief from destruction."¹ Thirdly, the Pudukkōṭṭai (Srivilliputtur, Ramnad) Plates (Śaka 1505) of Śrīvallabha and Varatuṅgarāma Pāṇḍya² are regarded as supporting Virappa's disloyalty in 1583. But there are difficulties in accepting the date given in the record, because it states that "Ativīrarāma Pāṇḍya having died, Śrīvallabha was anointed king by the ministers,"³ though it is dated in the 21st regnal year of Ativīrarāma, whose last known regnal year is 42, Śaka 1527, A.D. 1605. Dr. Burnell refers to a copper-plate grant that puts the date of death of Ativīrarāma in A.D. 1610.

The question is whether the Pudukkōṭṭai Plates may be assigned to about 1610. The record states that, "when the huge army of Veṅkaṭarāja was coming against him, he (Tirumalairāja who was devoted to Virapparāja and who employed in his wars against his enemies iron guns which he charged with leaden shots) saw in it Basavarāja, the ungrateful man who was once saved by him. Tirumalairāja killed this Basavarāja forthwith. When, in the battle that ensued at Vallaprākāra, the armies of Virarāja were destroyed and that of Achyutarāja fled away, Tirumalairāja collected all the horses from the battle-field."⁴ It is said that Adirāmpaṭṇam, near Paṭṭukkōṭṭai (Tanjore District) was named after Ativīrarāma during the period of Pāṇḍya occupation of a part of the Tanjore District.⁵ As regards the rulers mentioned in the plates, Veṅkaṭa and Achyutappa were alive in 1610, and Virarāja may be identified with Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka, who succeeded his father early in 1609. The Jesuit letters refer to Hermecatti Nāyaka as a powerful seignior who would not deign to go to the house of anyone

1. *Sources*, 248-49

2. *T.A.S.*, I, 61-84

3. *Ibid.*, 83

4. *Ibid.*, 84

5. F.R. Hemingway, *Tanjore* (1915), 39

and who was so overwhelmed with public affairs that he had no time even to eat.¹ A letter of 20th November, 1609 states that "the day before yesterday Hermecatti Nāyaka came to take leave of the Aiyar (Robert de Nobili); he departed, by the order of the great Nāyaka (of Madura), for a very perilous war. He promised to become a disciple of the spiritual law in case he returned safe and sound from this expedition by the grace of God."² Another letter dated 12th June, 1610 (Nobili to Vico) runs as follows: "Some days before my arrival at Madura, the celebrated Hermecatti Nāyaka had returned from the war..... He had distinguished himself by his bravery, taken by assault a fortress, I know not which, and returned victorious. The great Nāyaka (of Madura) loaded him with honours and new favours.....The king is fond of him and esteems him much."³ Vico's letter to Laerzio, dated 30-8-1611, states: "Hermecatti.....has dominions enough to be obliged to maintain for the Nāyaka's service three thousand infantry, two hundred horses and fifty elephants"⁴ Laerzio, writing to Aquaviva from Cochin on 25th November, 1611, says that "the war which has broken out between the great Nāyaka and the king of Tanjore has deprived me of the pleasure of seeing our Fathers of Madura."⁵ The two wars seem to be different, and the "very perilous" war of 1609-10 may well be the one mentioned in the Pudukkōṭṭai Plates. If this view is accepted, Virappa Nāyaka may be freed from the charge of disloyalty, even an inkling of which is not found in his inscriptions, while the inscriptions of Muttuvirappa Nāyaka I from 1610 give a strong negative

1. Bertrand, II, 4, 24 & 26

2. *Ibid.*, 62

3. *Ibid.*, 88-89

4. *Ibid.*, 125

5. *Ibid.*, 108

proof of his disregard of the imperial connection, besides positive evidences to the same effect.

THE GRAND CLIMACTERIC OF TŌPŪR, 1617

The civil war of 1614-17 has been discussed by scholars in the light of the account of Barradas¹ and indigenous sources.² We are told that "the imprudent policy that Śrīraṅga II followed in the administration of the empire estranged the feelings of his subjects, and strengthened the hands of his enemies. In the first place, he 'accommodated' in his kingdom many Belalas' with whom he became acquainted during his sojourn in Tanjore, and 'gave them honourable offices in the government'. This displeased his subjects considerably. Secondly, he drove some of the highest officers of state into opposition by making injudicious demands for the surrender of lands, money and jewels. Therefore Jaggarāya and his partisans gathered strength and overthrew the authority of Śrīraṅga by means of a strata-gem.....He mismanaged the affairs of state and perished as a consequence of his mismanagement."³ The second charge against Śrīraṅga is mentioned by Barradas.⁴ The Balalas employed by the emperor belonged to Jaffnapatam (Ceylon), and he had picked up their acquaintance at Tanjore. His encouragement of them might be interpreted as imposition of foreign rule. The close relations between the imperial and Tanjore courts are proved by Śrīraṅga's sojourn at Tanjore.⁵ Śevappa Nāyaka was the brother-in-law of Achyuta Rāya and the former's son was named after the latter. All this will explain the warm espousal of the imperial cause by Raghunātha Nāyaka of Tanjore. The

1. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 222-31

2. Heras, *The Great Civil War of Vijayanagara of 1614-18* (*J.I.H.*, V, 164-88); V. Vridhahagirisani, *The Nayaks of Tanjore* (1942), 82-90.

3. *Further Sources*, I, 327 & 329

4. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 225

5. Heras, *ibid.*, 180

account of Barradas penned in 1616 is confirmed by indigenous sources; the story of the washerman¹ who saved Śrīraṅga's second son aged twelve years; the heroism of Yāchama Nāyaka; and the audacious stroke of Jagga Rāya which increased his unpopularity and diminished his strength.

The well-known story of Tōpūr in 1617 need not be recapitulated here. The coronation of Rāmadēva re-established dynastic continuity. But the empire was ruined materially and morally, and its much diminished prestige emasculated it still further. William Methwold, the English Factor at Masulipatam (1618-22), writes as follows (1625-26). "The first kingdome upon the mayne is that ancient one of Bisnagar, rent at this time into severall provinces or governments held by the Naickes of that countrey in their own right; for since the last King (who deccased about fiftene yeeres since) there have arisen severall competitors for the crowne, unto whom the Naickes have adhered according to their factions, or affections; from whence has followed a continuall civill warre in some parts of the countrey, and such extreame want and famine in most of it, that parents have brought thousands of their young children to the sea side, selling there a child for five *fanums* (2sh 6ds) worth of rice, transported from thence into other parts of India, and sold againe to good advantage, if the gaines be good that ariseth from the sale of soules²Along their own coast (Gōlkonḍa) they trade with smaller shipping, lading rice and other graine where it is cheapest, selling it againe on the coast of Bisnagar to great benefit, taking children in exchange, which cost not them above three or four shillings a childe, and they sell againe in Masulipatam and other places for forty shillings."³ The term

• 1. *Ibid.*, 172

2. Moreland, *op. cit.*, 2-3

3. *Ibid.*, 39

"affections" applies to Tanjore and "factions" to Madura. Mysore and Ikkēri stood neutral. Barradas need not be found fault with for not mentioning the kingdom of Rāja Uḍaiyār. A Jesuit letter of November, 1622 refers to the severe famine which had raged in Madura for some years, so much so that nobody paid any attention to bury the victims of the scourge, and the dead bodies were placed on the banks of rivers and carried away by the waters in the rainy season.¹

The civil war which lasted for three years was unique in the annals of Vijayanagar. It was a serious internal trouble unlike Tālikōṭa. Tōpūr brought to an end the first phase of that war, which continued longer according to Methwold. The reign of Rāmadēva (1617-30) witnessed continual warfare.² Barradas says that he was twelve years old in 1614 and therefore his age would be twenty-eight in 1630, not 20.³ The putative son of Venkaṭa died in 1619, and Rāmadēva became the son-in-law of Yatirāja, brother of Jagga Rāya. Still troubles continued till 1629.⁴ The battle of Tōpūr (the battle of Trichinopoly, according to Barradas⁵) no doubt raised the prestige of Yāchama Nāyaka and Raghunātha Nāyaka, but neither really profited by it. It tremendously increased the centrifugal tendencies in the empire and may be regarded as its arch-emasculator. It did not end happily with the marriage between Raghunātha Nāyaka and the daughter of Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka. It condemned the empire to a further course of internal tension. In fact, the civil war lasted for fifteen years (1614-29). The battle of Tōpūr was indeed the grand climacteric of the Vijayanagar empire.

1. Bertrand, II, 217

2. H. Heras, *Rama Deva Raya II* (J.B.O.R.S., XVI, 137-53)

3. *Further Sources*, I, 338

4. *Ibid.*, 334 & 336

5. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 230

CHAPTER II

The Tragic Tug of War DECLINE OF VIJAYANAGAR

Tālikōṭa and Tōpūr caused together the ruin of the Vijayanagar empire. The permanent removal of the capital in succession to Penukoṇḍa, Chandragiri and Vellore never wiped away the memory of the grand capital, and those later capitals were also called Vijayanagar by indigenous and foreign writers. "Cities, like ships, are readily personified by the human imagination; and their greatness depends, not merely upon immediate practical values which can be expressed statistically, but also always to some extent, and often to a far greater extent, upon an imponderable prestige which is created and sustained by an emotional consciousness of their historic trials and triumphs."¹ Viscount Bryce emphasises the historical associations in the choice of a capital and "the enthusiasm for a famous name" as a powerful factor in politics.² Our Delhi is an instance in point, and its emotional value has been increased by the famous slogan, *Delhi Chalō*. Therefore we are justified in speaking of the Vijayanagar empire, even after Vijayanagar ceased to be the imperial capital. In short, the Rāya's permanent residence was called Vijayanagar, just as the place where Rāma the epic hero lived was named Ayōdhyā. Before proceeding to the last phase of Vijayanagar, let us consider the personal responsibility for the ruin of the empire effected by Tālikōṭa and Tōpūr.

Tālikōṭa was the result of the arrogance of Rāmarāja. Colonel Mackenzie notes this factor and

1. A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, II (1934), 400

2. Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, 7th edition, 311

remarks that some Muslim states would have supported Vijayanagar as a check to their rivals.¹ It is difficult to vindicate Rāmarāja's policy completely, though his failure at Tālikōṭa was his misfortune rather than his fault. Tirumala aggravated the situation precipitated by Tālikōṭa; he finally gave up Vijayanagar as the capital and withdrew to Penukonda in order to achieve his objective of usurpation.² The murder of Sadāśiva Rāya converted the empire into a bear-garden. Though Veṅkaṭa I rehabilitated it, he was also responsible to some extent for its decline. We don't hold him substantially responsible for the murder of Sadāśiva, because at the age of 20 years he functioned only as the instrument of his father's unscrupulous ambition. A scholar refers to "the uxorious helplessness" of Veṅkaṭa and to his being "the unconscious cause of the civil war".³ He not only set aside the more popular elder nephew Tirumala but importuned the younger nephew Śrīraṅga to shoulder the imperial burden. Barradas records that he, "bursting into tears, begged the King to give it to whom he would and that for himself he did not desire to be king, and he bent low, weeping at the feet of the old man."⁴ Moreover, Veṅkaṭa encouraged his putative son for fourteen years and gave him false hopes, that he was the heir-apparent, till the last moment. In short, the great emperor did not know what he was doing in his advanced age, though foreign observers knew that after him there would be the deluge. We have seen the all-advised policy of Śrīraṅga II as emperor. Jagga Rāya was no doubt the villain of the piece. The case of Madura requires elucidation. Muttuvirappa's espousal of the rebel cause prolonged the civil war, but the

1. J.A.S.B., XIII, 444

2. *Further Sources*, 293-94

3. Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, 512

4. Sewell, *op. cit.*, 223

circumstances in which he arrived at the decision are to be noted. He had been at war with Tanjore in 1611 and with the emperor during 1609-10, if the battle of Vallaprākāra was fought then. He need not be supposed to have deliberately supported the pretender's cause. He might have been influenced by the plight of the defeated and fleeing Jagga Rāya; he would have had no manner of doubt regarding the attitude of Tanjore in the affair. Methwold is right in saying that sides were taken by the Nāyakas according to their "factions or affections". It is suggested that Muttuvīrappa might have wished for a friendly emperor¹, but such a wish would mean only the desire to secure the advantage possessed for long by Tanjore. The transfer of the capital from Madura to Trichinopoly in 1616 was a warlike move. If Muttuvīrappa had stood neutral, Raghunātha might steal a march over him. In short, the hostility between Madura and Tanjore complicated the situation. As regards the neutrality of Mysore and Ikkēri, it is said that Rāja Uḍaiyār "did not join the insurgents against the interests of Rāma-Dēva. His own position should have been difficult as he was confirmed in his position only in 1612; he had evidently his hands full. It was as much as he could do to keep those round about him under control and not join the rebels²..... Possibly these invasions (of Bijāpūr) occurred at the very time the Civil war occurred and so the best that Veṅkaṭappa (Nāyaka of Ikkēri) could do was to keep himself fit to be useful to the Empire on a future occasion".³ Here is a glaring case of special pleading. Madura must have resented the special treatment accorded to Mysore and Tanjore by Veṅkaṭa I. Though Mysore did not participate in the civil war, we find her

1. Mysore Gazetteer (1930), II, Part III, 2287

2. *Ibid.*, 2305

3. *Ibid.*, 2307

committing aggression on Madura in the reign of Muttuvīrappa Nayāka (1609-C 27). The chronicles narrate the story of a Mysore invasion of the province of Dindigul, repulsed by the Pālaigārs of Virūpākshi and Kaṇṇivādi, who were consequently honoured with titles.¹ Whether the marriage of Raghunātha with the daughter of Muttuvīrappa established good relations between Madura and Tanjore or not, an inscription of 1618 (Kālayukti, Śaka 1542: A.D. 1620) records a grant by an agent of Virappa Nāyaka and feudatory of Vira Rāmadēva, then ruling at Penukoṇḍa. This may be taken as proof of the loyalty of Madura to the empire after Tōpūr.² Still we are told that Rāmadēva and his father-in-law Yatirāja besieged Trichinopoly in 1625 in order to secure recognition of the former as emperor, after Muttuvīrappa had looted Tanjore. In spite of the co-operation of Raghunātha, the invading army raised the siege owing to troubles near the imperial capital. There were similar hostilities against Madura in 1626.³ A Jesuit letter of the same year describes Virappa Nāyaka as "the powerful prince of this country".⁴ He was succeeded about 1627⁵ by his brother Tirumala Nāyaka.

TIRUMALA NĀYAKA

Tirumala Nāyaka (C 1627-59) was born in 1584 or 1585; Proenza's letter of 1659 states that he died at the age of seventy-five years;⁶ at the time of his accession to power he was about forty-three years old. We are not aware of the part he played during the regime of his predecessor, though he must have closely

1. *Nayaks*, 105-6

2. *Ibid.*, 351

3. *Further Sources*, 334 & 336

4. Bertrand, II, 254

5. *Nayaks*, 112

6. Bertrand, III, 50

observed the political-developments from about 1600, particularly the disastrous civil war. The editor and translator of the Jesuit letters (originally written in Italian, Portuguese and Latin) into French observes: "Tirumala Nāyaka, in pursuance of the project of his father (brother), which was to overthrow the domination of Bisnagar, wished to put himself in a condition to resist the armies of this monarch. With this object he constructed two fortresses on the frontiers of his dominions, (and) raised an army of 30,000 men. These preparations excited much movement and disquiet in the whole country".¹ These defensive preparations may be explained with reference to the events of 1625 and 1626 already mentioned. An inscription at Tāḍikkombu dated 1629 is supposed to show that Madura recognised Rāmadēva as emperor.²

Rāmadēva was succeeded in 1630 by Veṅkaṭa II, whose claims were disputed by Timmarāja, the paternal uncle of Rāmadēva. Pedda Veṅkaṭa II belonged to another branch of the Āravīḍu dynasty, being the grandson of Rāmarāja, while Rāmadēva was the great-grandson of Tirumala, younger brother of Aḷiya Rāmarāja. The resulting civil war continued for five years till the death of Timmarāja in 1635, though Prince Śrīraṅga supported his uncle Veṅkaṭa II, who however was obliged to remain at Ānegundi. In 1635 he proceeded to Vellore and began to function as sovereign³. This state of affairs is pictured in the Dagh-Register of 1631-34.⁴ It is clear that Timmarāja or Timma Rāya cannot be identified with Tirumala Nāyaka.⁵ About 1633 Chāmarāja of Mysore followed an aggressive policy to-

1. Bertrand, II, 198

2. *I.A.*, 1916, 185

3. *Further Sources*, I, 339-40

4. Bal Krishna, *Shivaji the Great*, Vol. I, (1932), Part I, 108-9

5. *I.A.*, 1916, 185, f.n. 33

wards Madura. The invading army reached Dindigul, but was beaten back by Daḷavāy Rāmappaiyan who pushed forth his success by a counter-invasion of Mysore. He returned completely victorious and was honoured by Tirumala Nāyaka. The hostilities between Mysore and Madura afford ample proof of the indifference of the central authority to feudatory quarrels. The letter of Proenza to Nikel dated Trichinopoly, 1659 states: "The Nāyakas of Madura had been punctual for a long time in paying the annual tribute; but their arrogance growing with their strength, they began to feel this subordination irksome. Tirumala Nāyaka, who rules now, walking in the footsteps of his father (brother), resolved to free himself. Too weak to resist his sovereign openly, he resorted to artifice. During several years he gave only rich presents as marks of deference and friendship, without paying his tribute. The old Narasinga dissembled and avoided the embarrassments of war".¹ The old Narasinga is Veṅkaṭa II; the reference is wrongly understood to be to Śrīraṅga III.² The non-payment of tribute by Madura is attributed to her increasing strength and arrogance, though she is said to be too weak to resist her overlord openly. She must have become sadder and wiser after the civil war, and Tirumala Nāyaka was not now a hot-headed youth. Mysore paid no tribute, and as against her special responsibilities may be mentioned the position of Madura *vis-a-vis* Travancore and the Portuguese. In the early days of the Nāyakship the empire safeguarded Madura against external aggression. In the period of Tirumala Nāyaka, it could not control the aggressive activities of Mysore and was powerless to provide the advantages due from a suzerain power. Consequently

1. Bertrand, III, 42

2. Mysore Gazetteer, *ibid.*, 2376

the tribute demanded from Madura would have been burdensome as she had to fall back on her own resources to defend herself. Though unwilling to pay tribute, Tirumala was inclined to respect his sovereign, to recognise his superior position, and to respond to any special call for help in emergencies. The Kūniyūr Plates¹ (1634) of Veṅkaṭa II vouch for the friendliness and dignity of his relations with Tirumala.

By 1638 Prince Śrīraṅga had turned against Veṅkaṭa II and espoused the cause of the Bijāpūr general Randulla Khān, who conquered Bangalore in that year, which witnessed the rebellion of that prince. Consequently the emperor appealed to his feudatories for help. He attempted twice in 1639 to capture Bangalore and opposed Randulla Khān and Prince Śrīraṅga twice in 1641. On the last occasion, Veṅkaṭa was definitely successful. In 1642 he resisted the invasion of his territory by the Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa, though not successfully, till his death in October, 1642. Thus it is abundantly clear that the invasions of the Vijayanagar empire by Bijāpūr and Gōlkoṇḍa started independent of Tirumala Nāyaka's alliances with them later, that Prince Śrīraṅga was guilty of treachery against his uncle-predecessor, and that Tirumala Nāyaka helped Veṅkaṭa II against his enemies, including Śrīraṅga, during the period 1639-41.² If further proof is needed, it may be derived from the famous historical ballad in Tamil.

Rāmappaiyan Ammānai: This is available in two versions: the Tanjore version is short, while the Madras version is full.³ The main theme of the ballad is the war of Madura against Śaḍaika Tēva II or Daḷavāy

1. *E.I.*, III, 236-58

2. *Further Sources*, I, 342-47

3. *Rāmappaiyan Ammānai*, edited by C. M. Ramachandra Chettiar, 1950, 36-41; *Further Sources*, II, 443-48 & III, 328-329; *I.A.*, 1916, 179-80

Sētupati, the chief of Ramnad. In the first campaign Rāmappaiyan, Daḷavāy of Tirumala Nāyaka, subdued the country as far as Ramnad. Consequently the Sētupati took refuge in the island of Rāmēšvaram. In the second campaign, a bridge was constructed over the Pāmban; the Sētupati was captured and taken prisoner to Madura. The Portuguese and the Dutch took part on the sides of Madura and Ramnad respectively, and the reference to naval engagements in the *Ammānai* is confirmed by Portuguese records and Jesuit letters. Rāmappaiyan was at Goa on the 13th August, 1639 to thank the Portuguese Viceroy for his help in the Marava war and to promise certain concessions to the Portuguese.¹ Therefore the war described in the ballad must have come to an end by that date. The *Ammānai* places Rāmappaiyan's expedition to Bangalore via Vellore, in order to help the Rāya against Muslims, between the first and second campaigns against the Sētupati. If this arrangement of events is correct, the expedition may be assigned to 1639, some months before Rāmappaiyan's visit to Goa; or to 1641, in which case a later event must have been antedated for literary effect. We have seen the activities of Veṅkaṭa II in 1639 and 1641. In any case, there can be no doubt regarding Tirumala Nāyaka's response to the appeal of the emperor for help.

The story of the expedition to Bangalore is as follows. News from his master reached Rāmappaiyan in his camp that the Mughal and Gōlkoṇḍa armies had invaded the dominions of the Rāya and looted Vijayanagar and Vellore, that they were on their move southward, and that immediate succour was needed. Consequently the Daḷavāy left his camp after giving

1. F. C. Danvers, *Report on the Portuguese Records Relating to the East Indies*, (1892), 43-44.

suitable advice to his officers and promising that he would return after a week. He halted at Mānāmadura and Tiruppūvanam, reached Madura, contacted Tirumala Nāyaka, and with his good wishes proceeded to the north, touching at the following places: Śōlavan-dān, Vaḍamadurai, Dindigul, Maṇappārai, Trichinopoly, Śrīraṅgam, Śamayavaram, Kaṇṇanūr, Uṭṭattūr, Vali-koṇḍapuram, Arni and Vellore. He met the Rāya at Bangalore. Assuring him that he would do his best and return victorious, he obtained the help of Venkaṭa-kṛishṇaiyar of Ikkēri, triumphed over the Muslims, and seized from them 1000 horses, 60 elephants and 50 camels. Rāmappaiyan saw the Rāya again and secured his approbation of the services rendered to him, coupled with costly presents. Though the Rāya was keen on having him at his court, Rāmappaiyan excused himself handsomely, and, promising to be at his service at any time, commenced his return journey. At Trichinopoly he became a cynosure of the ladies. Postponing at his suggestion the celebration of his victory by Tirumala Nāyaka at Madura, Rāmappaiyan returned to his camp and continued his war against the Sētopati.

This account mixes up the Mughals and the Bijāpūris, as is done by the Jesuit and Marāṭhā writers. It places Ānegundi between Vellore and Uṭṭattūr. It is moreover over-laudatory. But the co-operation of Ikkēri with Rāmappaiyan is not improbable; even if it is an invention, the general sobriety of the narrative is intensified. It is a circumstantial account establishing the attitude of Tirumala Nāyaka towards Venkaṭa II, whose goodness was reciprocated by the great ruler of Madura. Whether Rāmappaiyan crushed the Muslims or not, the story is broadly historical. The reference to Bangalore is certainly historical, if the expedition had been sent in 1639. In short, the account is sufficiently

sober and straightforward, and we cannot doubt the friendly attitude of Tirumala to Veṅkaṭa, whose considerate treatment of the great feudatory bore fruit, though the emperor did not live long enough to enjoy another instalment of the goodwill of Madura.

ŚRIRAṅGA III

With the accession to the throne of "the treacherous" Śrīraṅga III in 1642, events moved rapidly. On general considerations he must have been young; he was the third son of the younger brother of Veṅkaṭa II and lived up to 1672. He gave up his alliance with Randulla Khān of Bijāpūr and resolved to gird up his loins to defend the empire, which was in the grip of a Gōlkoṇḍa invasion. But he was handicapped by the treachery of Dāmerla Veṅkaṭa, his feudatory, who befriended the invader in 1643. Consequently Śrīraṅga secured the help of Bijāpūr and arrested the progress of the Gōlkoṇḍa invasion.¹ This shows that Tirumala Nāyaka did not initiate the policy of inviting Muslim help. The character of Śrīraṅga was very different from that of Veṅkaṭa II, who is described as follows by Rezende, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Goa, in 1635: "The King appreciates peace, and shows himself a friend to the Portuguese, though he is actuated by self-interest.....Along the walls on the outside he has houses built of stone in *chunam*, with orchards producing excellent fruit. All the Indian fruits can be grown here because the climate is good and very salubrious. The inhabitants enjoy sound health: the land is fertile, and abounds in all the necessities of life, everything being extremely cheap.....The coloured cloths are better than any others in the kingdom because dyed with the dye of Xaya (Śāya) which comes from Manār and Ceylon. It

1. *Further Sources*, I, 348-51

never runs, and scarcely fades".¹ Śrīraṅga was not of a pacific disposition. His ability and courage prompted him to a complete reversal of his predecessor's policy: "The new king (Śrīraṅga III), far superior to his father (predecessor and uncle) in talents and courage, hastened to vindicate his rights; without losing time in futile negotiations, he collected a formidable army and declared war".² Though Mysore was as strongly inclined towards independence as Madura, if not more, the opposition of Tirumala Nāyaka to the empire loomed large. Probably his personality and strength of will gave a special character and magnitude to the question of the imperial policy towards him. Śrīraṅga resolved to deal with Madura first and thought of putting the empire on a stable basis as a preparation for protecting it from Muhammadan encroachments. Tirumala Nāyaka must have been taken aback by the hasty and incautious policy of the emperor. "The Nāyaka of Madura enlisted in his defection those of Tanjore and Jīñji by concluding with them a league against their common sovereign. The latter, informed of everything through the Nāyaka of Tanjore, who had the meanness to betray his allies, marched at the head of his army and advanced on the territory of Jīñji:"³ The specific statement about the triple alliance is improperly called in question on the general ground that the hostility between Madura and Tanjore since 1610 would prevent the latter's initial acquiescence in such an alliance.⁴ In this predicament, it was open to Tirumala to throw himself on the mercy of the emperor and give up all ideas of independence or to secure his independence by all means in his power. If a crisis had

1. H.D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, I, 299

2. Bertrand, III, 42-43

3. *Ibid.*, 43

4. Vridhaghairisan, *op. cit.*, 133 f-n. 26

not been precipitated by Śrīraṅga, Tirumala would have co-operated with him as he had aided Veṅkaṭa II and adopted a deferential attitude towards him. To save himself from the wrath of the emperor, Tirumala sought the help of the Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa by inviting him to invade the imperial territory. The movement of his army forced Śrīraṅga to make a retreat and defend his own dominions. He succeeded in defeating it and securing its withdrawal. The Sultān of Gōlkoṇḍa made active preparations to regain his reputation, and when his next attack was delivered, Śrīraṅga found his position untenable. He now thought that his salvation lay in the whole-hearted support of his southern feudatories and entered into negotiations with them. Encouraged by their new attitude, consequent on the favourable terms offered to them, he devised with them plans for the expulsion of the Muhammadans from their recent conquests. But this new policy produced no satisfactory results. "Narasīṅga spent more than a year with the three Nāyakas in the midst of festivities, feasts and pleasures, during which the Muhammadans quietly achieved the conquest of his dominions. Soon vain joys gave place to jealousies and divisions. Rejected again by the Nāyakas, Narasīṅga established his court in the forest of Kaḷḷans, lying to the north of Tanjore, where he spent four months, a prey to all discomforts; his courtiers soon abandoned him, and this grand monarch, one of the richest in India, was forced to beg for help from the king of Mysore, once the vassal of his crown. He received from him invitation to choose for his stay a province more agreeable to him and assurance of a brilliant treatment worthy of his rank; he eagerly accepted the offer, so obliging, and found a hospitality which even surpassed the promises made to his ambassadors".¹ It is not

1. Bertrand, III, 43-44

known what exactly prevented the success of the new plan of joint action proposed by Śrīraṅga and accepted by his feudatories. The above extract from the Jesuit records shows that the Nāyakas were not solely responsible for the unhappy developments in the emperor's career. He became an emperor without an empire (1647). A scholar observes: "Tirumala Nāyaka's policy must have been directed by the movements of Mysore which, under Chāmarāja, the predecessor of Kaṇṭhīraṇṇa, had...been active in the direction of Channapaṇṇa. The next advance of Mysore would be into the Koṅgu, directly menacing the northern frontier of Madura".¹

Tirumala Nāyaka is blamed for inviting Muslim intervention in the quarrels of the Hindus. But Śrīraṅga and his other feudatories did the same. Aḷiya Rāmarāja before Tālikōṭa interfered in Muslim quarrels. In a book recently published² we find a defence of Safdar Jang, Nawāb of Oudh (1739-54) and Prime Minister of the Mughal empire (1748-53) against the charge that he resorted to the humiliating expedient of securing Marāṭhā assistance in the settlement of a domestic dispute; the author also points out the untenability of the statement that he was the first Muslim noble to do so: in 1719 Sayyid Husain Ali Khān brought the Marāṭhās to Delhi and in 1732 the Nizām adopted the policy of encouraging them to attack the Mughal empire in the north. With reference to the 16th century it is remarked: "To the north of the five Deccan kingdoms lay Gujarāt, Khāndēsh and Mālwa, to the south the large kingdom of Vijayanagar, and it is scarcely going too far to say that these nine powers might be formed

1. J.J.H., IX, 186

• 2. A. L. Srivastava, *The First Two Nawabs of Awadh* (2nd edition, 1954), 169-70

into almost any groups according to the exigencies of the moment".¹

Let us see what the English and Dutch records state regarding the position of Śrīraṅga. "1st October, 1645: This now Reigneing king.....has brought all his great Lords into his Comand, which has not bin this 40 yeares before".² It is said that "according to the Hague Transcripts, the three rebellious Nāyaks (Tanjore, Madura and 'Sinsier') inflicted a severe defeat on the royal forces in December, 1645."³ A letter of 21st January, 1646 says that "ever since...the 12th August last, the King hath bine in warres with the King of Vizapore, and in Civell wares with three of his great Nagues"⁴; another letter of 10th February, 1646: "This countrey is at present full of warrs and troubles, for the King and three of his Nagues are at variance, and the King of Vizapoores Armie is come into this cuntry on the one side and the King of Gulcondah uppon the other, both against this King...Meir Jumlah is Generall for the King of Gulcondah, whoe hath allreadie taken three of the Kings castles, whereof one of them is reported to bee the strongest hould in this Kingdome."⁵ A record of 9th October, 1647 states that "the King of Gulcondahs Gennerall.....hath almost conquered this Kingdome and reigneth as King under the title of Annabob (the Nawab)...We gave him one of the two Brass Guns...which hee would not bee denied of....., otherwise hee would not have confirmed our old priviledges formerlye graunted us by the now fledd Jentue King."⁶ According to the Hague Transcripts, XVII, No. 518, "the unhappy

1. Moreland, *op cit.*, XIV

2. W. Foster, *The Founding of Fort St. George* (1902), 30

3. W. Foster, *The English Factories in India*, VIII, 25 f.n.1

4. W. Foster, *The Founding of Fort St. George*, 34.

5. *Ibid.*, 35

6. *Ibid.*, 37

Raja of the Carnatic had taken refuge with the Nayak of Mysore."¹

Subsequent to the flight of Srīraṅga in 1647 the army of Gōlkoṇḍa advanced southward and besieged Jiñji. Vijayarāghava Nāyaka of Tanjore became panic-stricken and completely surrendered to the enemy. But Tirumala Nāyaka concluded an alliance with Bijāpūr—and he is blamed by the Jesuit writers—and was helped with 17,000 cavalry. With this and his own 30,000 infantry, he marched to the relief of Jiñji. This effective help, combined with the strength of the fortifications of Jiñji, rendered a protracted siege possible. But Gōlkoṇḍa came to an agreement with the Bijāpūr army, and entrusting it with the siege of Jiñji, withdrew to the north to consolidate her recent conquests. This *volte face* on the part of Bijāpūr and quarrels among the heterogeneous army of the besieged upset all calculations, and Jiñji was seized by Bijāpūr (1648). Thus betrayed Tirumala helped the besieged and diplomatically secured the withdrawal of Mir Jumla.² Shāhji Bhonslê broke with Mustāfā Khān on account of the latter's treachery to Tirumala Nāyaka.³ After the conquest of Jiñji the army of Bijāpūr marched against Tanjore and Madura, who "opened negotiations and submitted to the law of the conqueror. Thus, after conquering a vast country, subduing two powerful kings, and gathering incalculable treasures, without being put to the necessity of giving a single battle, and almost without losing a single soldier, the Deccan army returned to Bijāpūr, where it made a triumphal entry."⁴ But a sober chronicle says that, with the assistance of the Kaḷḷans, Tirumala routed the Muslims, who withdrew to Jiñji.⁵

1. Foster, *The English Factories in India*, IX, P. XXV

2. Bal Krishna, *op. cit.*, 124

3. *Ibid.*, 130

4. Bertrand, III, 46-47

5. *Nayaks*, 130

After the return of the Bijāpūr army, Śrīraṅga attempted, with the help of Mysore, to recover his dominions. He defeated the army of Gōlkoṇḍa which advanced against him. "Tirumala Nāyaka, instead of co-operating in the re-establishment of the affairs of Narasinga, who alone could save the country, recommenced negotiations with the Muhammadans, opened to them again the passage through the Ghats, and urged them to declare war against the king of Mysore, whom he should have sought for help. Bisnagar, betrayed a second time by his vassal, succumbed to the contest and was obliged to seek refuge on the confines of his kingdom, in the forests, where he leads a miserable life...prince (made) unhappy by the fault of his vassals, whom his personal qualities rendered worthy of a better fate. Kanakan (Khān-i-Khānān) did not wish to leave the country without levying ransom on Tanjore and Madura; he raised large contributions and returned to Bijāpūr full of riches."¹

It is creditable to Śrīraṅga that he was not inclined to remain a well-fed guest of Kaṇṭhīraṇa Narasa (1638-59) of Mysore. He bestirred himself with the help of Mysore and recovered a portion of his kingdom. He was also helped by Śivappa Nāyaka of Ikkēri, whose services to the emperor are recorded in the *Śivatattva-ratnākara*.² This work in Sanskrit mentions the capture of Vellore by Śivappa and the numerous honours conferred upon him by the emperor. It places that achievement sometime after Śrīraṅga's "wandering without a home." So the reference is to his second victory mentioned by the Jesuit writers. The *Rāmārājīyam* says that "once Śrīraṅga Rāya marched from his capital (Vellore) against the hill fort of Udayagiri,

1. Bertrand, III, 48

2. Sources, 347.

which was occupied by the Kuṭub Shāh, and utterly defeated him."¹ The Jesuit records specify two different occasions when Śrīraṅga was successful against Gōlkoṇḍa, the second time with the help of Mysore. From these records it is clear that his first attempt was for driving the Muslims out of his own dominions, which had just been occupied by them during his absence in the south. When he made a second attempt, he was the first to take the field, and his object was to recover the territories he had lost, not, as in the former case, to repel an army which had dispossessed him of his dominions. So the *Śivatattvaratnākara* and the *Rāmarājīyamu* may be taken to refer to the later success of Śrīraṅga. His progress towards the recovery of his kingdom was however nullified by the activities of Tirumala Nāyaka, who was frightened by the possible consequences to him of the united efforts of Kaṇṭhīrava and Śrīraṅga and who therefore invoked the aid of Bijāpūr. The intervention of Bijāpūr resulted in the defeat and flight of the emperor. Thus his second attempt to regain his dominions was also a failure. Mysore was now in no mood to invite and help him again. Kaṇṭhīrava probably thought of avoiding any recrudescence of his recent troubles. Thus Śrīraṅga's two separate efforts to re-establish his kingdom curiously resulted in his expulsion to the forest twice. The cup of his misery was now full.

Proenza says that "it appears certain that, if the three Nāyakas had joined him (Śrīraṅga) with all the troops they could gather, they would easily have succeeded in chasing the common enemy and depriving him of the advantage he had taken of their disunion and reciprocal betrayal,"² and that Tirumala should have befriended Mysore. The first suggestion is a psychological impossibility in the light of the traditional hostility

1. *Ibid.*, 311

2. Bertrand, III, 47

between Madura and Tanjore since the days of Veṅkaṭa I; the second overlooks the ceaseless aggressions of Mysore on Madura. Mysore did not help Śrīraṅga in the beginning of his struggle with the Muslims. After his second exile, the emperor found asylum in Bednur. There is nothing to indicate that it was loyalty to the empire which induced Mysore and Bednur to receive him; their schemes of self-aggrandisement must have prompted their hospitality. The subsidy which Tirumala would have to pay for the help of Bijāpūr is probably described as blackmail by Proenza.

Let us see the light thrown on the position of Śrīraṅga by the Factory Records: "Mir Jumla animated the Nāyak of Mysore against Bijāpūr and made overtures to the Carnāṭic Rāja. The latter, relying on Mir Jumla's promises, returned to Vellore and raised a large army hoping to drive the Bijāpūris out of the country. A letter from Batavia dated November 7, 1654 states that the Bijāpūr general had, after a long siege, captured Vellore and concluded a treaty with the Rāja by which Chandragiri was left to the latter with the revenues of certain districts."¹ Madras to Surat, 21st October, 1656 states: "All the country hereabouts rendered to the Jentu Kings obedience, who now, in the Nabobs (Mir Jumla's) absence, is up in arms for the recovering of his kingdom, and hath already recovered a large part"; Madras to Bantam, 5th November, 1656: "All these countries that were formerly conquered by the Nabob are now of late (in his absence at the Mogulls court) upon the revolt, the Jentue King with diverse Nagues being in arms".² A Batavia letter dated January, 1657 mentions the capture of the pagoda of Tirupati with an army of 8,000 men and his design of conquering Conjeeveram, Chingleput.....and Pulicat.³

1. Foster, *op. cit.*, IX, p. XXXIII

2. Foster, *op. cit.*, X, 97

3. *Ibid.*, 99

APPEAL TO THE GREAT MUGHAL

It is stated, on the authority of the *Ādab-i-Ālamgiri* that Śrīraṅga made two futile appeals to Shāh Jahān through Aurangzīb, Viceroy of the Deccan (1652-58), for protection against Bijāpūr and Gōlkoṇḍa, the first in 1653 and the second in 1655. In 1653 Rāma Rao, Śrīraṅga's agent, met the Viceroy, who however did nothing. On the second occasion, Śrīnivās the agent of Śrīraṅga said that his master would pay two and a half crores of rupees, two hundred elephants and all the jewels in his possession, besides an annual tribute, as the price of imperial protection. He was further prepared to enrol himself as a Mughal *jāghirdār* and even to embrace Islam along with his relatives and dependents "if Shāh Jahān's grace should be reluctant to fall on him on account of his being a misbeliever."¹ Aurangzīb had no idea of extending his sympathy towards Śrīraṅga, but the opportunity provided by the appeal was exploited by the Viceroy to get a share in the Karnāṭak loot of the Sultāns. "Aurangzīb's treatment of the Rājah of the Karnāṭak and his cynical avowal of his utterly sordid motives throughout the transaction, has a deep political significance. To the historian whose eyes are not dazzled by the Peacock Throne, the Tāj Mahāl, and other examples of outward glitter, this episode (with many others of the same kind) proves that the Mughal empire was only a thinly veiled system of brigandage."² Śrīraṅga must have been desperate beyond description after his second imperial disappointment, which had been preceded by a great hope of the rehabilitation of his political position, based on the goodwill of Mysore. In the intensity of his disappointment, he made promises, otherwise incredible, to Aurangzīb

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzīb*, Vols. I & II (in one), second edition (1925), 223

2. *Ibid.*, 226

even compromising his own status as a Hindu. In short, he was ready to sacrifice almost all his cherished possessions for the recovery of his kingdom, but nobody would rush to his rescue; his appeal fell flat on Aurangzib.

HUNT FOR NOSES

The *Adab-i-Alamgiri* states that Śrīraṅga made attempts in 1657 and 1658 (noted as "not definite") to recover his kingdom.¹ This is intelligible in the light of the furious wars between Mysore and Madura in the last regnal years of Kaṇṭhīraṇḍa and Tirumala (both died in 1659), described as "the Wars of the Noses" by Jesuit writers. Though the campaigns of Kaṇṭhīraṇḍa were not conducted on behalf of Śrīraṅga, they might have been supposed to be for the restoration of the emperor, as that ruler of Mysore had worked ostensibly for him before. Proenza states that "the king of Mysore took Tirumala Nāyaka to task for his disloyal conduct²... A special circumstance characterised its (the bloody war) ferocity. The king of Mysore had ordered to cut off the nose of all the prisoners; his soldiers, to distinguish themselves, executed this barbarous order on all those who fell into their hands, men, women, and children, and sent to Mysore sacks full of noses as so many glorious trophies. The Nāyaka, resenting this procedure, which; in the opinion of the Indians, added the most humiliating outrage to cruelty, ordered reprisals; and his troops burst out into the provinces of Mysore, seeking not enemies to fight with but noses to cut off. It is this which has given to this inhuman war the name of 'hunt for noses'. The king of Mysore, the first contriver of this barbarity, lost his own nose and thus suffered the penalty which he

1. *Ibid.*, 225

2. Bertrand, III, 48

deserved”¹ J. H. Grose refers to the “singular methods of the Mysore troops” and their “particular dexterity in cutting off noses”.² A reference is made to this Mysore practice in the Fort St. George resolution of January, 1679.³ The following comments by the Editor of the *Mysore Gazetteer* are interesting: “Evidently Kanthirava desired to mark his displeasure of Tirumala’s rebellion against his sovereign by ordering the infliction of this punishment on certain of his leading officials, a direction which was either carried to excess in its execution or grossly misrepresented as a regular ‘hunt for noses’. The whole life and character of Kanthirava seems to be against the ascription of such a barbarity to him⁴.....Cutting the nose was a kind of punishment that was reserved in olden days for those who proved treacherous to their sovereign. Tirumala had rebelled against his suzerain and Kanthirava, who was fighting on the latter’s behalf, probably inflicted it on the general of the opposing forces, which had hotly pursued the Mysore army on its retreat homewards.”⁵ The Editor collects further references to the subject tending to weaken his contention: “Mr. Rice suggests on inscriptional evidence that it was a practice adopted by the Mysoreans in order to instil terror into the enemy.” The Fort St. George resolution referred to above runs as follows: “Their custom is not to kill, but to cut off the noses with the upper lips of the enemies; for which they carry an iron instrument with which they do it very dexterously and carry away all the noses and lips they despoyle their enemy’s of, for which they are rewarded by the Naik of Mysore according to the number, and the reward is the greater,

1. *Ibid.*, 49-50

2. Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, 247

3. J. T. Wheeler, *Madras in the Olden Time*, I (1861-2), 104

4. *Mysore Gazetteer*, II, Part III, 2390

5. *Ibid.*, Part IV, 2441

if the beard appear (*sic*) on the upper lip. This way of warfare is very terrible to all that those people engage with, so that none care to meddle with them; they being also a resolute people and have destroyed many that have attempted them, for though they kill them not outright, yet they die by lingering deaths, if they make not themselves away sooner, as for the most part they do that are so wounded, the shame and dishonour of it being esteemed greater than the pain and difficulty of subsisting." Dr. Fryer, an English surgeon who travelled chiefly on the West and Coromandel coasts between 1673 and 1681, writes as follows: "The Raja of Saranpatam (Seringapatam) must not be slipped by in silence, because his way of fighting differs from his neighbours; he trains up his soldiers to be expert at a certain instrument to seize on the noses of his enemies with that slight either in the field or in their camps, that a budget-full of them have been presented to their Lord for a breakfast; a thing, because it deforms them, so abashing, that few care to engage with him; and this he makes use of because it is against his religion to kill anything."¹

BATTLE OF ERODE, 1670.

Proenza's letter of 1662 contains a reference to "the daring project" of Chokkanātha Nāyaka (1659-82) "to drive the Moghuls (Deccan Sultāns) from all the countries they had invaded, to re-establish the ex-king of Bisnagar in his country, (and) to give Jiñji back to its Nāyaka."² It is surprising that there is no other mention of Śrīraṅga in the Jesuit letters after 1662, though he lived for ten years more. Probably his movements were not known to their authors, or they might have thought that he had ceased to be an important factor in South Indian politics. Thevenot observes that "he was

1. *Ibid.*, Part III, Addenda et Corrigenda, pp. XIII-XV

2. Bertrand, III, 121

constrained to fly into the mountains, where he still lives."¹ Obviously the reference is to 1666-7 when the French traveller visited Bhāgnagar, the capital of Gōl-konḍa, and Masulipatam. Śrīraṅga's inscription of 1663 at Bellary mentions him as living then "at Vēlāpuri on his jewelled lion throne." Chokkanātha Nāyaka's grants recorded in two inscriptions of 1665, and one of 1667 were made "in the reign of Śrīraṅgadēva Rāya." Chokkanātha's authority in the Coimbatore and Salem districts till at least 1669 is indicated by his inscriptions at Tiruchchengōḍu, Kaṇṇadiputtūr, Kaṇiyūr and Kumāraliṅgam. He recognises Śrīraṅga, as emperor in three of them and also in his Śrīraṅgam record of 1662. From 1669-70 however the inscriptions of the rulers of Mysore are found in those districts. It is therefore clear that, during the last years of Dēvarāja Uḍaiyār (1659-72), there were encroachments on the territory of the Nāyaka of Madura. Consequently the battle of Erode may be assigned to about 1670, when Chokkanātha Nāyaka and others fought and failed against Mysore to uphold the imperial claims of Śrīraṅga, who subsequently fled to Bednur².

There has been a lot of speculation during the past thirty years and more about the date of Śrīraṅga's death. It was said in 1930 that "there is ample reason to believe he was active on the political stage till 1681 A.D."³ The same opinion is expressed in a book published in 1946: "He appears to have returned to Penukonḍa in A.D. 1665.....He continued to rule probably until A.D. 1681"⁴ But in 1938⁵ I pointed out the correct date, 1672. A letter of Fort St. George

1. Thevenot, *Travels*, Part III, 91

2. *Sources*, 21.

3. *Mysore Gazetteer*, *ibid.*, 2407

4. *Further Sources*, I, 369

• 5. *A Vindication of Venkaṭa Bhonsle* (Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Allahabad, 1938), p. 398, f.n. 23

to the Company, dated 16-12-1672 states: "Another cloud begins to gather towards the mountaines where the old Gentue King of Cornatta, whose harsh carriage to his great ones was the losse of this countrey, being newly dead, a brothers sonn succeeds in his rights".¹ This passage sets at rest all speculations regarding the final date of Śrīraṅga and supports my contention that the feudatories of the Vijayanagar empire should not be made scapegoats for his failure.

TIRUMALA vs. ŚRĪRĀṄGA

It has been usual to decry the feudatories of Śrīraṅga as entirely responsible for his failure and ask us to look at this picture and that: an impeccable Śrīraṅga and a peccable Tirumala, a saint and a sinner. But Tirumala was a soldier of merit, and Rāmappaian's continuous and devoted service proclaims the great quality of his master in choosing, using and keeping capable servants of state. After the great Daḷavāy's death between 1641 and 1648, Tirumala took an active part in the war against his overlord and exhibited his resourcefulness. Undaunted by the treachery of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka of Tanjore at the critical hour, he invited the intervention of Gōlkoṇḍa and subsequently of Bijāpūr and hastened to the relief of Jiñji in 1648. The further progress of the Muslims he checked by defeating them and making them fall back on Jiñji. Whether he was successful or not, he never lost his presence of mind and never gave up his plans when once they were deliberately formed. The Kūniyūr Plates of Venkaṭa II, dated 1634, credit him with great soldierly qualities, and we cannot say that the eulogy is absolutely false. It is not true to say that he fought with Śrīraṅga for a mere name, for the mirage of independence; he was quite willing to render obeisance to

1. *English Records on Shivaji*, (Shivaji Tercentenary Memorial Series, Vol. VI, Poona, 1931), Vol. I, p. 232.

the emperor as in the case of Venkṭa II. One-third of the revenues of the country had to be given as tribute in return for practically no advantages to his kingdom. He must have noted during the early part of his long career the special treatment meted out to Mysore and Tanjore, even though the former became independent in 1610. In the early days of the Nāyakship of Madura, subordination and tribute meant safety from foreign aggression and small expenditure on external defence. Now the emperor was powerless to execute his will, and Madura had herself to organise all her defences. In the case of his second Mysore war during the closing years of his life, he ordered a destructive invasion of Mysore only to punish the perpetrators of horrible mutilations and other barbarities; his first war with Mysore was also the result of her aggression. He did not desire annexation of neighbouring territory; he only wanted freedom to organise his own affairs. If he committed any error of judgment as in the Ramnad question, he showed that corrigibility was one of his virtues. The remarkable loyalty of the Sētupati towards the close of Tirumala's reign was not a little due to the latter's kind and encouraging attitude towards the former. But Tirumala was not without faults. He did not calculate the cost of his undertakings, and his wars were exhausting enough to impoverish his kingdom. Proenza says that Tirumala possessed great qualities but lost them towards the end of his life.¹ When he started the imperial struggle, he was nearly sixty years old and probably Śrīraṅga was about thirty for the reasons already mentioned. A Jesuit letter of 30th January, 1709, says that, on the death of Tirumala, a temple was erected and he was worshipped.² There is no doubt that he left

1. Bertrand, III, 50

2. J. Lockman, *Travels of the Jesuits*, II, 379

a strong impression on the minds of his subjects and others.

Śrīraṅga was a more courageous and talented emperor than his uncle, Veṅkaṭa II. Perseverance was the dominant note of his character. Undaunted by disappointments, he persistently attempted to infuse life into the almost moribund imperial system. When driven to extremities, he was inclined to sacrifice his all, provided that such a sacrifice would ward off the extinction of his empire; *vide* his appeal to the Great Mughal. Though he must have realised by bitter experience the difference between life in the palace and that in the forest, and though he was driven from pillar to post, he endured all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune with remarkable courage. Though his two victories over the Deccan Sultāns were each time followed by a crisis in his life and though he was kicked like a football by feudatory after feudatory, he could not be forced into passivity. In the midst of a life of strange and tragic vicissitudes, he gave some attention to victories of peace. Literary men were patronised by him, and it is well known how he encouraged in 1645-46 the activities of English merchants. He is eulogised by a contemporary Jesuit as a ruler who was wiser than his feudatories and who "alone could save the country". There is no doubt that his personal worth deserved better results than those which attended his efforts.

Though a man of high ideals and abundant energy, Śrīraṅga is recorded to have once lapsed into fatuous lethargy detrimental to his interests. He is said to have lost much precious time by throwing himself into pleasures in the company of his southern feudatories, when the Muslims were seizing his dominions in the north. We have seen his treachery to Veṅkaṭa II and his tactlessness in dealing with his feudatories. There

was precipitancy and lack of prudence in his actions and movements which made his victories mere oases in the desert of his failure. It does not appear that he carefully calculated the chances of his ultimate success, or estimated the extent of co-operation which his policy would secure from his feudatories. Disaffection was not confined to Madura. If the facts of the situation had been known to him, it is not easy to understand how he could have ventured on the war-path. Either he was unaware of the extent of opposition which an attempt to rejuvenate the empire would call into being, or he was confident that he could set things right unaided, seeing that the hostility of Mysore and Madura would prevent their combination against him. He does not seem to have considered whether it was practicable to revitalise the empire in the teeth of provincial opposition. Ever since the battle of Tālikōṭa, the feudatories of the empire were learning to care more for their separate interests than for their common imperial interests. The civil war of 1614-17, damaging to the prestige of the empire, accentuated the diversity of provincial interests. Though the empire was formally preserved after that catastrophe, and Rāmadēva and Veṅkaṭa occupied the imperial throne in succession, their rule only hastened the decline of the empire. If Śrīraṅga had appreciated his *damnosa hereditas*, he must have pondered over the possibility of reviving the imperial power in its plenitude. The only practical solution of the problem was perhaps the establishment of a common understanding for the preservation of imperial interests, without the assertion of the legal rights of the emperor to the full and unquestioned obedience of his feudatories. If hostility to the empire had been confined to the minor provinces, or to a small part of the empire, a different policy might have

succeeded. But, under the circumstances, an arrangement which would conduce to concerted action against external dangers was alone feasible—the conversion of the nominal empire into a strong confederacy.

Whatever may be said against the policy actually followed by Śrīraṅga, his idealism commands our admiration. His efforts to metamorphose the rickety empire into an actively functioning body invest his career with imperishable glory. His was a splendid failure, mainly due to the circumstances in which he found himself and to the attitude of Mysore and Madura. It was not loyalty to the empire that induced Mysore and Bednur to welcome Śrīraṅga in misery but their schemes of self-aggrandisement. But it is easy to exaggerate the selfishness of the feudatories. In the case of the emperor, his own personal interests coincided with those of the empire. It is not true to say that Śrīraṅga was not at all responsible for his failure; *vide* the observation, “whose harsh carriage to his great ones was the losse of this countrey” in his obituary notice penned by the English Factors at Fort St. George. A less ambitious policy and a more considerate attitude might have secured the interests of the empire without offending the susceptibilities of its feudatories. But the emperor and his major vassals were all blind to their own real interests and to those of their country. The tragic tug of war between Śrīraṅga and Tirumala was a case of diamond cut diamond. If Śrīraṅga III fought nobly for the integrity of the empire, Tirumala Nāyaka realised, like Asāf Jāh, the impossibility of saving the whole empire and succeeded in saving a respectable slice of it. Still we must admit that Śrīraṅga III was

A brave man struggling in the storms of fate
And greatly falling with a falling state.

(Pope)

CHAPTER III

The Last Nāyaka of Tanjore

ALLEGED USURPATION

Vijayarāghava Nāyaka (1633-73) was forty years old when he succeeded his father Raghunātha Nāyaka; he died in 1673 at the age of eighty.¹ The *Raghunāthābhyudayam*, a Telugu drama written by Vijayarāghava, says that Rāmabhadra was his younger brother and that he participated in the battle of Tōpūr.² But Vijayarāghava is also regarded as the younger brother. What creates suspicion is the statement of Proenza that "in the confusion of this pillage (in 1659), the prisons were thrown open and a multitude of state prisoners were set free, the sole crime of most of whom being their fortune or social position. Among the latter were two brothers of the Nāyaka whom he had shut up in these prisons, after pulling out their eyes to remove all desire on their side of succeeding him."³ If Vijayarāghava were a usurper, the genealogy given in his own work cannot be relied upon. Moreover, he imprisoned his own son Mannāru Dāsa and provided him with golden chains, according to the *Tanjāvūri Āndhra Rājula Charitra*.⁴ Moreover, Rājachūdāmaṇi Dikshita's *Ānandarāghava Nāṭakam* refers to Achyūta and Rāmabhadra as sons of Raghunātha. There seems however no doubt regarding Vijayarāghava being a legitimate son. The argument cannot be accepted that "the general character of the Nāyaks themselves and their peaceful rule as borne out by the

1. *Nayaks*, 167, f.n. 38

2. *Sources*, 254

3. Bertrand, III, 53

4. *Sources*, 325

literary evidence do not admit the possibility of an usurpation".¹ Therefore it is better to suspend our judgment regarding the alleged usurpation of Vijayarāghava.

The first decade of Vijayarāghava's reign was peaceful. But the accession of Śrīraṅga III, which precipitated a crisis in the empire, involved Tanjore also. It is futile to question the statement of Proenza that Tanjore joined the coalition against the emperor and subsequently backed out of it and befriended him, on the ground that the hostility between Madura and Tanjore since 1610 had hardened into a tradition.² When Śrīraṅga was nonplussed by the vigour of the attack on him of Gōlkoṇḍa, he came to an understanding with the three Nāyakas, "invited them to join him against the common enemy, and offered them favourable conditions, which were accepted".³ This categorical statement at Proenza cannot be nullified by the observation that, "from the general attitude and character of the Tanjore Nāyaks, it is not possible to entertain any suspicion as regards the loyalty of Tanjore, and the arrival of Śrīraṅgarāya near Tanjore on the eve of his proposed negotiations would only confirm Vijayarāghava's more friendly attitude towards the empire".⁴ Śrīraṅga's attempt at rapprochement was however not successful; he had wasted more than a year with the three Nāyakas in festivities, feasts and pleasures. He spent four months in the forests of Kaḷḷans to the north of Tanjore and fled to Mysore in 1647.

VIJAYARĀGHAVA'S PANIC TERROR

Proenza gives a graphic picture of Vijayarāghava's reaction to a detachment of Muslim (Gōlkoṇḍa) cavalry

1. Vriddhagirisān, *op. cit.*, 129

2. *Ibid.*, 133

3. Bertrand, III, 43

4. Vriddhagirisān, *op. cit.*, 135

reaching the environs of Tanjore: "Nothing more was necessary to spread in the citadel a panic terror, of which there are few examples. The inhabitants believing that they were besieged by the whole army of the enemy, rushed in crowds in the streets, ran against one another, fell head over heels in uttering frightful cries without knowing what they were saying or where they were going. The fright and disorder were augmented by the din of weapons, the sound of trumpets and drums, and the agitation of the soldiers, who ran in every direction, increased in the streets, and asked with a bewildered air, what is the matter, where is the enemy? Everybody trembled without knowing why. The crowds moved like the floods of a torrent towards the gates of the fortress. Those who arrived first did not dare to go out for fear of falling into the hands of Muslims, nor could they retrace their steps, because the streets were overcrowded. In this confusion the men, crushed under the feet of horses and elephants, uttered cries and horrible howls; one would think the town had been taken by assault and delivered to pillage. However, the bravest moved on to the ramparts, furnished with a prodigious quantity of pieces of artillery of every calibre and started unloading them, firing in the air and at random without any other object than that of frightening the besiegers; but the rush handicapping their manoeuvres, the pieces, improperly loaded, did not even produce the desired explosions. A single instance will give you a measure of their skill. A big cannon, in the mouth of which a man could conveniently hold himself couchant, having been put into action throughout the night, one found on the morrow all the bullets in the ditch on the bank of which it was set. The Nāyaka, who should have inspired the courage of others, was of all persons the most demoralised by the terror. During the whole night he was anxious only to hide himself and change his refuge every instant,

seeking everywhere a safety which his fear found nowhere. At last, when the morning dissipated the darkness and put an end to this confusion, one was astonished to find no enemy, and it was recognised that all this confusion was caused by 500 Moghul (Gōlkoṇḍa) cavaliers who pursued Narasiṅga without any thought of approaching Tanjore".¹ Thus ended this much ado about nothing.

The triumph of Gōlkoṇḍa over Śrīraṅga was immediately followed by her advance on the territory of Jīñji. "The Nāyaka of Tanjore knew that he could not give pitched battle to an enemy whose mere number had created so much terror; but he could no longer count on his ally of Madura, whom he had scandalously betrayed. Obligated to take sides, he did what one would always do under the influence of terror; he decided on the most senseless and disastrous step; he delivered himself up to the king of Gōlkoṇḍa and concluded with him a treaty by which he surrendered at discretion."² After the conquest of Jīñji in 1648, Bijāpūr marched against him, but he sought safety in inaccessible forests and subsequently submitted to the law of the conqueror.³ He did the same thing again in 1653.

Balthasar Da Costa's letter, dated Tanjore, 1653 describes the religious activities of Vijayarāghava: "The months of March and April have been for our Christians a period of alarms and persecutions. It is the season when the people, after the harvest, are engaged during their leisure hours in the noisy pomp of pagan solemnities. This year the fury of the festival has been stimulated also by the example of the Nāyaka. In that which he has celebrated in the great *pagōḍa*, he has

1. Bertrand, III, 44-45

2. *Ibid.*, 45

3. *Ibid.*, 46-47

spent nine thousand *ecus* exclusively for illumination and fire-works during eight days. More considerable sums have been devoted to the decoration of ten or twelve triumphal cars of gigantic dimensions, and he has ordered to cover them entirely with gildings. Our enemies are clever to profit by these epochs of exaltation in creating trouble for us."¹

THE GREAT LIBERATOR: A HOAX

Da Costa's letter of 1653 narrates the story of a great hoax. "In the previous letters we have mentioned the Great Liberator expected in these countries. It would be a long romance if I were to relate all the particulars of this fable which the *Yōgis* (penitents) have cleverly exploited. The fanaticism for this future emperor and his mother had become general and formed one of the most numerous sects, or rather absorbed all the sects; for the *Yōgis*, perceiving that the business was profitable, made themselves enviable to the predictors of the divine monarch. The name of Caesar in the midst of his conquests did not produce the sensation excited in all these countries by the romantic glory and imaginary exploits of that infant. Everywhere one talked only about his power, the wonders which surrounded him, the terrible punishments meted out to those who were audacious enough to doubt his advent and his power: one such person fell dead immediately; another had been struck blind as a punishment for his incredulity. The kings themselves submitted to the opinion of the public and submitted in advance to the empire of the announced liberator. The Nāyaka of Tanjore said in the presence of all his captains that, for his part, he was ready to receive the king wished for as soon as he would come and give him all the money he would be pleased to demand and that he would consider himself happy to be his vassal. Things had come to such

1. Bertrand, III, 27-28

a pass that the first adventurer who would present himself in the name of that monarch would conquer all these kingdoms without striking a blow. When everybody was in expectation and the *Yōgis* exploited everywhere the credulity of the public, a poor woman, who found it difficult to feed her blind husband, thought of a more simple expedient to live in comfort. Procuring a horse, a parasol, some clothes, in a word, the little things necessary for her new role, she posed as a *Yōginī*. Accompanied by ten or twelve ministers, among whom was her husband, she travelled through the country and proclaimed herself the ambassadress of the miraculous mother of the great emperor. She was welcomed everywhere with enthusiasm; all people went out to meet her, received her in triumph, made rich offerings to her, and believed themselves blessed when they could drink some drops of the water in which she had washed her feet. The new *Yōginī* enjoyed her role perfectly: her penance was not confined to the common rules as she was super-human; it consisted in eating nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing, and that was the wonder. This was only the first part of the miracle.....She arrived in that equipage, surrounded by all that prestige, in the kingdom of Satyamangalam; received with extraordinary honours, she secured at first the good graces of the Queen-Mother, who prepared for her a palace; meanwhile she continued to visit the various provinces and receive everywhere the homages, ovations and presents of all the small towns. However, as our Christians exercised influence at the court, one arrived and suggested to the Nāyaka some suspicion of the fraud. He decided to be assured of the truth: soldiers were posted very secretly in the place where the famous *Yōginī* was to be received. She arrived; she devoted some hours of the night to satisfy the curiosity and devotion of the crowd and especially to receive their offerings; then she took leave

of everybody and remained alone with her retinue. Immediately far from the eyes of the public, she was provided with an excellent repast, and nature reasserted all her rights. That was the moment the soldiers were waiting for; they came out of their cells, surprised the *Yōginī* in the very act (caught her red-handed), seized her and all her attendants and conducted them at once to the governor of the province, and from there to the palace. This is only a very small episode of the endless romance of the famous emperor; each province has its own, more or less amusing.....The divine emperor was settled with his mother in a town of the north named Bangalore, occupied by the Muslims. They, who were strangers to the stupid fanaticism of idolatrous Indians, were not duped. But, seeing the multitude of devotees who hastened from a distance of fifteen and twenty days' journey, and, above all, the rich presents brought by them, they knew how to profit by so fine an occasion. They encouraged the general enthusiasm, assigned to their guests guards of honour, whose real aim was to watch that they did not escape with their wealth, and thus allowed to continue the concourse of pilgrims of all countries during six or seven months. When they thought that the time was ripe, they caught the imposters, cut off the head of the emperor, caused the death of his mother, and seized the treasures they had amassed. Thus ended this comedy a little tragically. The *Yōgis* however were not disconcerted; they proclaimed everywhere that the mother and the son must soon come back to life, that then alone would they fulfil the prophecy, and they found people credulous enough to be duped once more".¹

FATE OF THE ROYAL TREASURES

After the death of Tirumala Nāyaka in 1659, his son
 • and successor Muttu Virappa Nāyaka II resolved to

1. *Ibid.*, 37-40

strengthen the fortress of Trichinopoly in order to resist Muslim onslaughts effectively. But Vijayarāghava invited a Bijāpūr invasion under Shāhji and Mulla Muḥammad by sending his ambassadors to the Ādil Shāh. Frightened by the defences of Trichinopoly, the Muslim army made a sudden attack on Tanjore on 19th March, 1659 and seized it. This was followed by the capture of Mannārgudi and Vallam. "The idol of Mannār whose son the Nāyaka calls himself.....He had no more faith in his courage than in the fidelity of his subjects; he sacrificed his dearest and fled to the forests of Talavarāyan, his vassal.....(The defenders of Vallam)....., actuated only by the feeling of self-preservation, without any kind of devotion to a king who deserved so little of them....., believed that they would be safer in their impenetrable forests than behind their ramparts. As soon as night came to conceal them, they escaped, one after another, without noise and with such perfect agreement that, at daybreak, the commander found himself in a deserted town with only a few faithful officers. They also made up their mind to follow the fugitives; but, when going way, they wished to take their share of the treasures (of the Nāyaka kept at Vallam, which was considered impregnable) which they abandoned to the enemy; they opened the coffers of the Nāyaka, took what they could carry of the most precious in gold, pearls and precious stones, and fled to the most inaccessible forests. Their strength was not in proportion to their greed; they were obliged to abandon a part of their riches on the way, and soon they found themselves entirely relieved by the Kallans who robbed them. The latter, informed of the condition of the fortress, hurried to it in crowds, placed one of them as guard at the gateway, and possessed themselves of these fabulous treasures which till then were not counted but, in measuring them by the bushel. Everyone took in his

clothes as many pieces of gold and precious stones as he could carry; those who came late followed the footsteps of those proceeding before to gather what fell from them in going hurriedly. This is without doubt the happiest episode of the war. These treasures, the fruits of the avarice of kings and of the labour of the poor, were thus saved from the rapacity of the Muhammadans and divided among a crowd of indigent families, to whom they procured an honest life. The Kallans used them with more generosity than could be expected. Seeing the Nāyaka in misery, they restored to him a part of his riches, protesting that they had taken them only to preserve them safe. In the confusion of this pillage, the prisons were thrown open and a multitude of state prisoners were set free, the sole crime of most of them being their fortune or social position. Among the latter were two brothers of the Nāyaka, whom he had shut up in these prisons, after pulling out their eyes to remove all the desire on their side of succeeding him. At last, the Muhammadans arrived at Vallamkōṭṭai and found only the walls there; they put a small garrison in it and burst out on the country. They have already been, for several months, in possession of this beautiful and fertile country; no one knows yet what their ulterior designs are, whether they will establish themselves here, or will content themselves with collecting the riches they can find there and return to their country afterwards".¹

VIJAYARĀGHAVA'S RELIGIOUS EXERCISES

Proenza's letter of 1659 tells us that Vijayarāghava was good to the missionaries. His edict assuring protection to them was indited on a column erected by his order before their church.² But a eunuch who

1. *Ibid.*, 51-53

2. *Ibid.*, 60

inflamed him by some indiscreet words of the Christians took advantage of his subsequent anger to imprison the missionaries.¹ Proenza gives a picturesque account of the religious exercises of Vijayarāghava: "The Nāyaka of Tanjore spends the whole of December in the midst of his idols. Two hours before sunrise he wakes up to go to the sanctuary of Mannār, which is his place of delight; he remains there five hours wholly engaged in shedding on the God's head a continuous stream of sweet-smelling flowers; the cultivators of the environs have been ordered to bring them from hour to hour so that they might always be fresh. While the prince offers this sacrifice in his mysterious solitude, the whole town takes part in this noisy solemnity. Fireworks, cannon, musical instruments, in a word, all the uproar of a diabolical festival excites the enthusiasm of the spectators. During this month the Nāyaka lives the life of a *sannyāsi*; not only does he abstain from everything that had life or principle of life, but what he eats should be prepared by himself, and he does his cooking in vessels of gold and silver intended for this use. His devotion does not stop there; ceremonies and processions are above all necessary for him. Here is what he never misses to celebrate in honour of his spiritual master. The *guru* (Kumāra Tātāchārya) is seated in a niche richly adorned and carried by the dames of the court; in another niche, shining with gold and precious stones, are placed the slippers of the *guru*, and the King, going on foot, a censer in hand, precedes the slippers and the censers during the whole procession, which must proceed thus through the different streets of the town. The *guru* would not be satisfied with these honours once a year; whenever he entered the palace or came out of it, he was always carried in a rich litter in the midst of Brāhman charged

1. *Ibid.*, 61

with the censer, like an idol. This divinity made to order does not shelter the pretended god from the blows of death. Last year (1658) he fell grievously ill; the king visited him and nursed him with the tenderness of a son. When he saw him nearing his end, he assured him that, in recognition of the good advice he had given him, he would give him magnificent funerals and offer for him many prayers and good works. The last words wounded the pride of the *guru* who, accustomed to be regarded as a god, felt insulted by the offer of those aids which he did not at all, said he, require. If the blindness of his pride went to the extent of making him think as he talked, his awaking must be terrible at the threshold of eternity. The Nāyaka, true to his word, ordered the celebration of his obsequies with extraordinary pomp. Some months later the Nāyaka thought of making a pilgrimage to Ramanancor or Rāmēśvaram. This island, situated between the coast of Coromandel and the straits of Mannār, is especially celebrated for its tank; celebrity well merited since the goddess Perumāḷ, bathing in its waters, communicates to it the miraculous virtue of effacing all sins, past and future! To obtain this effect with more certainty, the Nāyaka, on the persuasion of his Brāhmans, imitated the example of illustrious *sannyāsīs*; he shaved from head to foot and imposed the same ceremony on all the seigniors of his court. This deed was famous throughout the country as an act of eminent merit. But what secured for him much more glory was that, according to the custom of pilgrims of royal blood, he weighed himself with the queen on a weighing machine arranged for this purpose before the idol and offered a sum of gold equal to the weight indicated by the balance. He did not get off so cheaply. On his return his beloved idol Mannār became jealous of the money he had spent in honouring a foreign god; it began to make loud cries and threaten

the kingdom with the most terrible scourge, so that the pious king, seized with fright, thought it his duty to hasten and spend again more than twenty thousand *ecus* of gold in order to appease it. While he consoled himself for his expenses by telling the wonders of the idol of Ramanancor, he believed he should address a new deputation to honour him in his name and found no person more worthy of so noble a mission than the eunuch I have mentioned above: Prince, answered boldly the sworn enemy of Christianity, I am astonished that, spending your treasures for honouring Perumāḷ, you allow to live in peace, not only in your kingdom and in this town but even in your palace, the persons who dare to say that Perumāḷ is not a divinity and that all you do in his honour is without merit; if Perumāḷ is only a chimera, what is the purpose of these honours and enormous expenses; if he is a true divinity, why do you tolerate in your court a law which despises him and tends to destroy his cult? The argument, you see, was skilful and pressing. The Nāyaka asked, who were then these men, and on the reply of the eunuch, ordered him to bring immediately the principal Christians of the palace. Only one was present: he was the nephew of the first seignior of the court. He was brought before the king, surrounded by his wives and courtiers. Is it true, the prince asked him, that you know the Christian law? Not only do I know it, replied the intrepid neophyte, but I profess to practise it. And immediately, he recited the ten commandments of God, explained them as best as he could, and apologised, on account of his youth and ignorance, for his inability to express himself more exactly. The Nāyaka, satisfied with his reply, sent him away with the assurance that he could say his prayers.¹

1. *Ibid.*, 61-64

STORY OF MAIKONḌĀN

We have already referred to the forest of Kaḷḷans to the north of Tanjore and to the part played by them in appropriating the treasures of Vijayarāghava at Vallam. "The Muslims, often attacked in isolation or dispossessed stealthily by the Kaḷḷans, followed them into their retreats and carried desolation into the woods, where the Christians had taken refuge, killing men, robbing women, and carrying away children to make them slaves."¹ Meicondono (Maikonḍān) was a chief of the caste of Kaḷḷans. He was a celebrated man throughout the country and his boldness made the bravest tremble. He heard one day that a young Christian, very skilful in swordplay, had started a school of fencing. As he had himself won the glory of excelling in that art, his vanity was flattered to find a worthy adversary. He sent for him and invited him for measuring with himself; the neophyte thought that he should evade a proposal more dangerous than honourable and gave as excuse the baseness of his own condition, which did not permit him to fight with a person so noble and so distinguished. His true reason was the well-founded fear lest the terrible adversary, carried away by his impetuous character at the first scratch he received, should set aside every law of fencing and use his strength for avenging his vanity. Maikonḍān guessed his fear. Don't fear, said he to him, I wish that you use the advantage of your art with full freedom and without reserve; I shall promise, on my part, to restrain myself rigorously in observing the rules. The master of arms, reassured by this frank declaration, accepted the challenge, took the sword in hand, did the honours of salutation, and executed with grace the minute ceremonial required by usage. Then, he

1. *Ibid.*, 54

assumed a position, and the combat commenced. He held himself at first on the defensive and confined himself to parrying the blows of his antagonist, whose skill did not equal his vigour and quickness. Thereupon, taking the offensive in his turn, he made the assault and delivered a blow which proved all his ability in saving the adversary. As soon as he felt wounded, Maikoṇḍān, seized with admiration, gave up his sword, threw himself on the neck of the young Christian, and declared that from this moment he chose him as his master. The neophyte thanked him for the honour bestowed upon him and accepted his proposal in the hope of carrying to his heart blows invisible and more salutary. In this design the skilful master displayed at the same time the rare quality of his art and the amiability of his character. He tried at first to gain the esteem and affection of his new disciple; then, he profited by the intervals of repose to give him spiritual advice. He effected in the manners and character of Maikoṇḍān a change which astonished everybody. Immediately, he ordered the construction in his estate of a presbytery and a church. A governor of the country, making his round to raise contributions, said to him one day that he was astonished to find a man of his rank embracing a law so infamous. The very name of Maikoṇḍān was a safe-conduct.¹

POLITICAL IMPOTENCE OF TANJORE

Proenza's letter of 1662 refers to the occupation of the kingdom of Tanjore by Shāhji and Mulla Muḥammad during the past two years. "The people were not uneasy thereby; they sufficiently accommodated themselves to the yoke of the conqueror, in whom they found less cruelty and more justice than in their

1. *Ibid.*, 77-81

own sovereigns.¹ Famine and pestilence drove the inhabitants to the provinces of Madura and Satyamaṅgalam, where the ravages were less terrible. The Muslim armies suffered much, and Mulla Muḥammad tried to come to terms with the Nāyakas. But "the Nāyaka of Tanjore, having nothing to lose or to give, held himself peacefully in the woods; that of Madura confined himself to the fortifications of Trichinopoly, defended by Liṅgama Nāyaka at the head of a strong garrison. The famine and contagion forced Mulla to abandon Tanjore; he came to besiege Trichinopoly with the elite of his soldiers (1660). But, on the one hand, the view of this citadel, protected by nature, surrounded by high walls and a very deep ditch; on the other, the courage of the besieged and the vigilance of the sentinels deprived him of all hope of surprising it by a ruse or taking it by force. He began to devastate the country, but this was to ravage a desert with much labour and without any profit; besides, it was harassed by Kaḷḷans who, coming out of their woods in the night, fell on the detachments of the army, penetrated as far as the camp and fled away with booty before they could be pursued."²

Chokkanātha Nāyaka (1659-82) was only sixteen years old when he succeeded his father, Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka II. Consequently the principal officers (Daḷavāy, Pradhāni and Rāyasam) usurped power, and, as a blind to their usurpation, formulated the ambitious scheme of an anti-Muslim offensive, coupled with a plan to re-establish the old order of things in politics, including the restoration of Śrīraṅga III. Daḷavāy Liṅgama Nāyaka, one of the triumvirate, was entrusted with the execution of the scheme. In 1662 he proceeded with an

1. *Ibid.*, 119

2. *Ibid.*, 120

army of 40,000 to expel Shāhji from Jiñji, and capture the fortress. His military reputation was so great that none could suspect the *bona fides* of the coalition of ministers. True to their plan, he protracted the campaign and enriched himself with bribes from the enemy. Thus the usurpers enjoyed absolute power. Expecting a bold move from Chokkanātha, they rigorously regulated his freedom and confined him to his palace with due honours. When the young king chafed against their leash, they hatched a plot to dethrone him and enthrone his younger brother Muttuliṅga Nāyaka. With the connivance of Liṅgama, the ministerial clique summarily dealt with the loyal adherents of the prince and put them out of the way. Chokkanātha was let into the secret by a lady of the court; and he exhibited a courage and resourcefulness far above his age. He skilfully negotiated with two of his trusted lieutenants who were then in exile and gave them the cue to nip the conspiracy in the bud. With startling rapidity they discharged their duty; the Rāyasam was murdered and the Brāhmaṇ Pradhāni was blinded. Chokkanātha became free and lost no time in rallying his partisans around him. He did not however feel strong enough to punish the Daḷavāy openly for his disloyalty; he concealed his anger in a show of friendship. When at last he decided to deal with him severely, the wily general got scent of his plan and made a speedy escape. He joined Shāhji and persuaded him to besiege Trichinopoly. Accordingly, with an army of 12,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry and with assurances from Vijayarāghava, they endeavoured with confidence to meet Chokkanātha's 50,000 men. The young king did not perceive a flaw in his arrangements. The new Pradhāni was of the same pattern as his predecessor, and he did not scruple to foil his master's plans. His sympathies were entirely with the enemy, and he worked so cleverly

that most of the leaders on the kings' side lost their lives or fell into the hands of the enemy. This treachery was taken advantage of by Liṅgama Nāyaka to make an attempt to seize Chokkanātha and depose him. At last the king realised his folly and made haste to repair the harm done. He boldly assumed command of the army and put forth vigorous efforts. His character and energy strengthened his cause and numerous recruits flocked to his standard. Desertions from the opposite camp became frequent. Liṅgama and Shāhji lost heart and withdrew to Tanjore, whose ruler had favoured their project. Gradually Chokkanātha's self-confidence increased and with an army of more than 70,000 he marched against Tanjore. The two generals hurriedly retreated to Jiñji and Vijayarāghava made an abject surrender.¹

ACUTE HUMAN SUFFERING

The country suffered unspeakable misery for three or four years. The excessive and fatal religious zeal of Vijayarāghava made him culpably negligent of his subjects' sufferings. "How to describe the anguish and sufferings of our Christians, wandering on the mountains as so many living skeletons, a prey to the horrors of war and to the distress of famine!.....Our neophytes above ten thousand died of misery. The province of Tanjore suffered most.....A large number of *émigrés* proceeded to Trichinopoly, where war and hunger pursued them; others took refuge at San-Thome..... But shame, eternal shame to the Dutch, who cruelly speculated on the misery of the Indians. They enticed them to the coast by the bait of abundant food; then, when their number became pretty large and their strength a little recouped, they piled them up in their

1. *Ibid.*, 121-23

ships and transported them to other countries to be sold as slaves. Yes, shame to the barbarians!"¹ The steward of the gardens of the king and the *pagōḍa*, who enjoyed his master's favour, followed him to the woods². The famine which followed the departure of the Muhammadans and the Kallans who began to infest the whole kingdom obliged the missionaries to retire to Trichinopoly. The neophytes were taken to Satyamaṅgalam, where they remained for one full year. During the interval, the church and the presbytery were burnt by the people, who attributed to the Christians all the evils which afflicted the country.³

The condition of Tanjore in 1660 is described by Philip Baldæus, the Dutch minister in Ceylon: "At the time of our first arrival (1660) we found the Affairs of Negapatnam in no small Confusion; the City having been just before besieged by the *Naik*, who after a vigorous Sally made by the Besieged, had been forced to retreat with the Loss of 300 or 400 men. Besides this, the King of *Visiapour* had not long before the Siege made an Inroad into the Country and by destroying all the Fruits of the Earth, and whatever else he met with, occasioned such a Famine, that the poor Country Wretches being forced to fly to the City for want of Rice and other Eatables, you saw the streets cover'd with emaciated and half starv'd Persons, who offer'd themselves to Slavery for a small quantity of Bread, and you might have bought as many as You pleased at the rate of 10 Shillings a Head; about 5000 of them were there bought and carried to *Jafnapatnam*, as many to *Columbo*, besides several thousands that were transported to *Batavia*. In the year 1669 the *Naik*

1. *Ibid.*, 123-25

2. *Ibid.*, 125

3. *Ibid.*, 127

was again embroil'd with the *Dutch* Company, but being bravely repuls'd was glad to be at quiet."¹ The Dutchman gives the following account of the three Nāyakas: "The *Kingdom of Carnatica* extending 60 *Badagarian* Leagues (one whereof is equivalent to three *Dutch* Miles) from South to North, and 40 from *Paliacatta* to the Coast of Malabar. In this Country it was that the three *Naiks*, or Chief Lords of the Crown of *Velour*, keep their Residence, who pay a certain Yearly Tribute to that Crown, viz., the *Vitipanaik* of Madure, the King's Bason-Bearer, 200 *Pagodes* (each of which is worth six *Holland* Guilders) *per annum*; the *Christapanaik* of *Chengier*, the King's Betel Box-bearer, as many; and the *Naik* of Tanjouwer his Umbrella-bearer who is Lord of Negapatnam, 400 *per annum*. These Dignities being hereditary time out of mind, the Countries of *Madure*, *Chengier* and *Tanjouwer* have been annexed to them, under condition of a Yearly Tribute, and are besides this oblig'd to give their personal Attendance at the Coronation of the lawful Successor of the before-mentioned Kingdom."²

FALL OF MAIKONḌĀN

Proenza's letter of 1662 completes the story of Maikonḍān: "While all the inhabitants sought safety in flight and abandoned their houses and lands to the enemy, Maikonḍān knew how to keep his dominions intact. He was assailed several times by detachments of Muslim cavalry, but he drove them back so vigorously that, astonished at his bravery, they left him in peace and gave him the appellation of King of the Forest. After the departure of the Ādil Shāhi armies,

1. Philip Baldeus, *A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Coromandel as also of the Isle of Ceylon, etc.*, Amsterdam, 1672, (tr) London, 1703 (John Churchill), Vol. III, 651

2. *Ibid.*, 654

the Kaḷḷans, his neighbours and his relatives, whose cowardice took shelter in his valour and glory, caused him continual annoyance, with the result that there were bloody partial wars, in which Maikoṇḍān came out always victorious. At last the Kaḷḷan chiefs, humiliated by such a superiority and almost all having a defeat to avenge, combined their forces and advanced against the common enemy. He expected them in his citadel with the disdainful calm inspired by the consciousness of his strength, but his valour did not know enough to guard against treachery. While he braved the efforts of the besiegers, the traitors delivered the place to them; they rushed there instantly and filled it with bloodshed. Maikoṇḍān, followed by his brother and some brave-men, forced a passage and retired to a place of safety."¹ At last he came to grief.

PUBLIC CALAMITIES

Chokkanātha relieved human suffering to some extent. He issued orders to feed the starving irrespective of their locality, and he himself came from Madura to Trichinopoly to supervise the work of charity: "The young king Chokkanātha came from Madura to Trichinopoly and gave a public banquet to the poor, who hastened in thousands from all the neighbouring countries. A vast plain, situated on the banks of the Kāvēri, formed the dining hall. The plates of the country, that is to say, banana leaves were arranged in several rows. From distance to distance rose heaps of rice, around which were prepared divers condiments, according to Indian custom. Bands of men and women were entrusted with the distribution of food to the guests, each seated before his plate in divers parallel files. At the commencement of the

repass, the prince arrived on horseback surrounded by his court. He proceeded along the space between the rows and was pleased to see the poor starving people eat. The abundant relief distributed was not however adequate to the needs. Thousands of people perished of hunger and misery."¹ Public calamities were too numerous and severe to be amenable to human control: "Extraordinary events threw into terror all the inhabitants of this province (Madura). Several infants were born with their teeth all formed; wolves, bears and tigers, coming out of the forests, dispersed in the country, often penetrating into the town of Madura up to the inclosure of the ground of our church; many persons died suddenly without any symptom of disease; hosts of noxious insects, whose stench was as insupportable as their bite was painful, darkened the air, fell on the houses and infected all the country. These incidents, most of them being the result of war and epidemic, worked on the imagination of the people who saw in these portents the shadows of greater misfortunes in store for them."²

In 1663 Trichinopoly was besieged by Vanamian, the renowned captain of the Ādil Shāh. There was panic everywhere. The only redeeming feature in the situation was the confidence reposed by the people in Chokkanātha's courage and wisdom. Vanamian tried to frighten him into submission by displaying his resources, but was disappointed. His attempts to storm the fort were of no avail as the artillery of the besieged could not be silenced. His losses were so great that he was compelled to raise the siege, but he succeeded

1. *Ibid.*, 129-30

2. *Ibid.*, 155-56

in completely destroying the suburbs and ruining the surrounding country. The crops were devastated, villages burnt, and their inhabitants ill-treated and captured to be made slaves. To avoid this dishonour many put an end to their lives *en masse* by gathering together in a house and setting fire to it and in other ways. The nobility slew thier women and children, plunged the sword into their own bodies, and fell on their corpses. After pillaging the county to the utmost extent Vanamian persuaded Chokkanātha to pay him a large sum of money as a condition of his leaving the country. By thus buying off the Muslims, he gained the opportunity he yearned for to wreak vengeance on Vijayarāghava of Tanjore for betraying him and co-operating with the enemy. He marched with a large army to Tanjore, captured Vallam, dictated terms to her ruler, garrisoned the conquest and returned to his kingdom.¹ But his occupation of Vallam was undone in the following year (1664). John Nieuhoff states: "The Nāyak of Madure had been for a considerable time in war with the Nayak of Tanjaor and taken many places from him ; in my time the war was renewed with more vigour than ever ; and the Nayak of Tanjaor having gathered a great army attacked the Nayak of Madure so briskly that he took from him in a few days all the places he had conquered from him before. The army of the Nāyak of Madure being much disheartened by the victories of their enemies, the Madure sent to me to Koylong his chief governor, desiring assistance from the (Dutch) Company ; but as it was not our interest to engage on any side, I excused it as handsomely as I could."²

1. *Ibid.*, 158-60

2. *Nayaks*, 332

VIJAYARĀGHAVA'S REBIRTH

Proenza's letter of 1665 gives a picture of Vijayarāghava after his failure against Chokkanātha in 1664: "Permit me to enliven my narrative with a small trait of the Nāyaka of Tanjore. After having been defeated and fleeced by Chokkalinga, whom he had notoriously betrayed, he knew no more how to spend his glorious hours of leisure. His Brāhmaṇs persuaded him that he had nothing better to do than to be born again. Immediately the work started: a colossal cow was cast and the king shut himself up in her womb. After many ceremonies which it would be too long to describe, the wonder was revealed: the animal of bronze brought forth another animal quite alive. The wife of the great Brāhmaṇ, guru of the Nāyaka, acted as midwife; she received him in her arms, lulled him on her knees, caressed him on her bosom and, to complete the farce, the big infant sought to imitate the cries and wailings of a real new-born. What was most laughable in that comedy was the seriousness assumed by the actors. The spectators laughed in their sleeves, the neighbours laughed all aloud, but those who should have laughed most heartily were the Brāhmaṇs, to whom the ceremony brought enormous sums of money."¹ The religious zeal of Vijayarāghava is vouched for by the *Taṅjāvūri Āndhra Rājula Charitra*: "Every day before 1 yāma (9 o'clock) he used to feed 12,000 Brāhmaṇs in his kingdom and himself eat after that. He used to go from his palace at Tanjore to the temple of Śrīraṅgam, which was 3 āmaḍa (30 miles) distant daily. He had 50 changes of Boyees on the road and used to start early morning at sunrise and return after worshipping the God after 16 ghaḍis (12-24 o'clock)."²

1. Bertrand, III, 164-65

2. *Sources*, 324

REPUBLIC OF BRIGANDS

Proenza's letter of 1665 records the decline of the power of the Kaḷḷans: "The caste of Kaḷḷans has declined sensibly from its old strength; it is the effect of the wars which have afflicted this kingdom, and still more of the divisions amongst themselves. Many Indians rejoice at the enfeeblement of this republic of brigands, who came to attack and pillage whole villages with an audacity and bravery which nothing could resist. Others regard their decline as a misfortune for the country, because in times of war a company of these brave men was worth an army. It is certain that the Muhammadans during their invasion dreaded these Kaḷḷans much more than the king's armies. None is so capable of a *coup de main* like them. Uniting skill and agility to courage, they went out of their woods in small bands, dispersed in the country in disguise, and were always ready to reunite at the first signal. Is it a question of lifting a horse? The Kaḷḷan requires only an instant to run like lightning, rush on the horse and carry off his prey. Without any bridle, he commands him and drives him where he desires; nothing can detach him from the horse; one can say that with him he is no more than one same being. Soon, surrounded by a hundred adversaries who rush on him, he dashes like thunder across their ranks and disappears in the midst of a cloud of dust. The same audacity coupled with the same skill accompanies the Kaḷḷan when he goes to pillage the camp of a sleeping army."¹ Andre Freire's letter of 1666 refers to Maikoṇḍān's brother. "The brother of the famous Kaḷḷan Maikoṇḍān served, to the north of the Coleroon, a petty prince, then at war with the Nāyaka. Charged with the defence of a fort which

1. Bertrand, III, 184-85

the enemy came to attack, he resolved with his company to resist to the last extremity and perish rather than surrender. The enemy entered the fortress owing to the cowardice of some traitors; all the besieged were massacred with the exception of some who could escape from the conquerors."¹ Britto's letter of 1683 mentions a most distinguished woman, "the aunt of the famous Maikoṇḍān.....Her merit and capacity have secured for her the respect of these fierce Kaḷḷans; they don't believe that they are dishonoured in leaving the government of the country to such a woman."²

MALADMINISTRATION OF TANJORE

Andre Freire's letter of 1666 gives a lurid picture of Vijayarāghava's administration: "The Pradhāni of Tanjore, to fill the royal treasury and make his own fortune, gave to a Brāhmaṇ the authorisation to despoil all the vassals without any formality. Whoever by dint of labour and industry had gathered some money was by this alone guilty, doomed to be proceeded against by the (finance) minister. In conveying this order he had only the largest fortunes in view; but the Brāhmaṇ, who had also a purse to fill, extended the decree to all ranks, and employed for execution means so violent and cruel that the inhabitants, seized with consternation, sought safety in flight. The artisans suspended their work; the merchants closed their shops; most of the people left their homes; and the kingdom showed the appearance of a desert. The king could not ignore such barbarities; but, being himself thirsty of gold, he dissembled in the hope of gathering the fruits of these plunderings; then, when he thought the moment favourable to strike a blow, he understood that the minister had

1. *Ibid.*, 214-15

2. *Ibid.*, 349

known how to take measures and remove his treasures. He took vengeance on him by giving him up to the people's anger; this was the most equitable and severest punishment which he could inflict on him; for nothing is more terrible than the anger of the weak when impunity is assured to them."¹ This passage makes it clear that there is no justification for the statement that "Vijayarāghava.....a philosopher king.....soon remedied the sufferings of his people."² In the same letter Andre Freire observes: "A spectacle so sad... Tanjore under a government so arbitrary and bizarre,"³ Vijayarāghava has been described as "a philosopher king." He ruled for forty years, and his record is gloomy and depressing but for his learning and piety and for his patronage of culture. He might be a practical philosopher but could not be given the appellation of "philosopher-king" in the sense in which the expression was used by Plato. The Jesuit testimony is so clear and decisive regarding his radical shortcomings as a ruler of men.

FALL OF VIJAYARĀGHAVA

There is a lacuna in the series of Jesuit letters between 1616 and 1676. The letter of 1676 refers to that of 1673 containing an account of the wars of Chokkanātha, and the letter is not available along with others that might have been written during the intervening decade. Andre Freire's letter of 1676 merely states that "the Nāyaka of Madura.....took possession of the kingdom of Tanjore and cut off the head of the king, his enemy. This barbarous action could not preserve his conquest. Idal Khān, informed of these events, sent

1. *Ibid.*, 201-2

2. *Vridhaghairisan, op.cit.*, 144 & 161

3. Bertrand, III, 203

an army under the command of General Ekōji to re-establish, on the throne of Tanjore, the son (grandson) of the defeated king who had gone to implore his help."¹ We have to depend almost entirely on the indigenous chronicles like the *Taṇjavūri Āndhra Rājula Charitra* for the circumstances leading to the fall of the Nāyakship of Tanjore. We are told that "the immediate event that preceded this war was the reconquest of Vallam by Vijayarāghava about A.D. 1664....The reconquest of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka of his lost territories and the old animosities between Madura and Tanjore constituted the main causes for a war in A.D. 1673."² How could the immediate cause of the war be placed nine years before its outbreak? We saw the contending parties in the battle of Erode about 1670, and it is likely that disagreements arose between Chokkanātha and Vijayarāghava as a result of their defeat in that battle, which probably precipitated a war between them in 1673. According to the chronicles, the war was caused by the refusal of Vijayarāghava to give his daughter in marriage to Chokkanātha, who probably demanded the princess as a subterfuge for his intended war. Vijayarāghava's refusal to accept the proposed matrimonial alliance might be due to his extreme conservatism, born of the connection by marriage between his family and the imperial house of Vijayanagar. Śevappa Nāyaka was the brother-in-law of Achyuta Rāya. There is no evidence to confirm the statement of the chronicles that Tirumala Nāyaka stabbed one of his wives, a Tanjore princess, for speaking disparagingly of his new palace at Madura and preferring her father's palace at Tanjore. Most probably Vijayarāghava attributed all his past sufferings to the ambition of

1. *Ibid.*, 247

2. Vriḍḍhagirisān, *op.cit.*, 151-52

Chokkanātha. There could have been no goodwill between the two. The fundamental causes of the war of 1673 should be sought for in the loss of Vallam and other territories by Chokkanātha in 1664 and the long tradition of hostility between the two Nāyakships since their foundation. According to the *Taṅjāvūri Āndhra Rājula Charitra*, Kṛishṇadēva Rāya made Viśvānātha Nāyaka sole ruler of the Pāṇḍya and Chōḷa countries, but Achyuta Rāya separated the Chōḷa country from the Nāyakship of Madura and entrusted the government of the new province to his brother-in-law.¹ Besides the possible misunderstanding arising out of what might have been construed as Achyuta's nepotism in modifying the policy of his illustrious predecessor, the close personal relations between the royal houses of Tanjore and Vijayanagar must have intensified the original ill-feeling between Madura and Tanjore. This tradition of hostility must have crystallised since 1610, particularly since 1617 and conspicuously since 1659 when Tanjore began to pursue a pro-Muslim policy against Madura.

In 1673 Bellanger de Lespinay and his interpreter Antonio Cattel "landed in the territory of the Nāyaka of Tanjore, who sent the order to receive them well, hoping for the aid of France against his mortal enemy, the Nāyaka of Madura.....Bellanger de Lespinay set out therefore in embassy with his interpreter and twelve soldiers and was welcomed properly by the Nāyaka, who asked him curiously about France and directly demanded from him money in lieu of presents. Cattel put an end to the astonishment of the gentleman by informing him that the Hindu seigniors were never moved but by

their interest. Then, convinced that he had nothing to hope for from a prince so greedy, Lespinay quitted Tanjore".¹

According to the chronicles, consequent on the contemptuous treatment meted out to the agents of Chokkanātha carrying the proposal of marriage, he decided upon avenging the insult and sent an expedition to Tanjore under Daḷavāy Venkaṭakṛishṇappa Nāyaka. A detachment of Vijayarāghava's army was defeated before the capture of Vallam and the news of its defeat led to his mobilisation of a large force to meet the army of Madura which was rapidly proceeding towards his capital. A well-contested battle secured the victory for Chokkanātha. Vijayarāghava rejected the message of Venkaṭakṛishṇappa urging him to accept the marriage proposal and avert disaster. Consequently Tanjore was besieged. The Madura army entered the town. Another message of goodwill was sent, but Vijayarāghava did not budge an inch from his original attitude. He continued the fight though many abandoned his cause as hopeless. After arranging for the blowing up of the harem at his signal, he effected a reconciliation with his son Mannāru Dāsa, whom he had imprisoned for his improper attentions to a daughter of Gōvinda Dīkshita, the great minister of Achyutappa Nāyaka and Raghunātha Nāyaka.² Both father and son resolved to fight to the bitter end. The last conciliatory message of the Daḷavāy of Madura was rejected and the harem was destroyed. After mutual slaughter, the mines were set fire to and all perished. Vijayarāghava died along with his son in the struggle that ensued. But Andre Freire

1. Paul Kaeppelin, *La Compagnie des Indes Orientales et Francois Martin*, 1908, 102

2. Vridhagirisān, *op. cit.*, 153 f. n. 16

says that "the Nāyaka of Madura.....took possession of the kingdom of Tanjore and cut off the head of the king, his enemy."¹ Veṅkaṭakṛishṇappa garrisoned Tanjore and returned to Trichinopoly. The whole kingdom of Vijayarāghava was annexed by Chokkanātha, who appointed his foster-brother Aḷagiri Nāyaka as his Viceroy of Tanjore.

1. Bertrand, III, 247

CHAPTER IV

The Fraternal Fray

Since the publication in 1924 of the Madras University Historical Series No. 2, several writers have made good use of the Jesuit records: Fr. H. Heras, Sir J. N. Sarkar, Dr. S. N. Sen, Dr. Bal Krishna, Prof. C. S. Srinivasachari; Mr. Hayavadana Rao (in the Mysore Gazetteer, revised edition, 1930), Mr. S. Natarajan, Mr. V. Vriddhagirisan and Mr. C. K. Srinivasan. Extracts *in extenso* from my *History of the Nayaks of Madura* are found particularly in the writings of Mr. Hayavadana Rao, Mr. Natarajan and Mr. Vriddhagirisan. Dr. Sen wrote to me in 1924: "I thank you very much for your information regarding contemporary Jesuit letters about Shivāji's Karṇāṭak expedition. I find your translation of the Jesuit letters extremely interesting. The Jesuit account of Shivāji's Karṇāṭak expedition agrees substantially with the Marāṭhā account. Like the Marāṭhās, the European Jesuits also indiscriminately used the term Moghul for all Muhammadans and the word Ādil was transliterated as Idal by the Marāṭhās also." The letters of the Madura Mission are of great value not only for the history of the Sētupatis of Ramnad, the Nāyaks of Madura, Tanjore and Jīñji and for that of Mysore and Travancore but also for the Marāṭhā beginnings in the Tamil country. In these lectures I have utilised a good number of Jesuit letters translated by me from French into English after the publication of my first book in 1924. I may mention here that, in Mr. C. K. Srinivasan's *Maratha Rule in the Carnatic*, 1945, the second and third chapters dealing with

Shāhji and Veṅkāji contain some of my views and even expressions, because they are based to some extent on my special lectures to Honours students and on my published writings. Therefore a striking family likeness is inevitable between my account of Veṅkāji here and Mr. Srinivasan's published account. Mr. Natarajan's *Political Geography of South India in the Seventeenth Century* has not yet been published, but a typescript copy is available in the Annamalai University Library.

TANJORE AFTER VIJAYARĀGHAVA

We have seen the installation of Alagiri Nāyaka as Viceroy of Tanjore in 1674. He restored peace and order, organised the affairs of the kingdom, sent its surplus revenues to his master, and remained faithful to him for some time. But his ambition increased with time and he grew indifferent to the remittance of the surplus revenues to Trichinopoly, capital of Chokkanātha since 1665, and even to the usual correspondence. He posed as an independent ruler of Tanjore and sometimes addressed his master accordingly, without heeding the latter's admonitions. Alagiri justified his attitude as harmonious with the custom of the court of Tanjore. Chokkanātha was furious, but his ministers advised him to exercise self-restraint and watch further developments without bestowing any thought on a punitive expedition immediately. Alagiri was extremely impolitic in alienating Chokkanātha, when his own position in Tanjore was by no means secure. The increasing estrangement between the two is noticed by Andre Freire in his letter of 1676: "follies and mutual jealousies between the two brothers...The Nāyaka of Madura soon fell out with his brother."¹ The dis-

gruntled Rāyasam (Secretary) Veṅkaṇṇa, who continued in power under Aḷagiri, exploited the growing tension between his master and his master's master and awaited a rupture between the two. He came to know that a prince had been saved from the catastrophe which befell the royal house of Tanjore in 1673 and secretly brought up at Negapatam by a wealthy merchant (a petty merchant, according to another chronicle). The arch-intriguer Veṅkaṇṇa, actuated by egocentrism, worked out a scheme to dethrone Aḷagiri and enthrone the child-prince Cheṅgamala Dāsa (two or four years old in 1673), said to be the son or grandson of Vijayarāghava (better grandson because Vijayarāghava was eighty years old at his death). Veṅkaṇṇa used all his influence to complete the breach between Aḷagiri and Chokkanātha, organised the preliminaries to a *coup d'état*, and hastened to Negapatam. With the boy and his nurse he proceeded to Bijāpūr for the Sultān's help in the restoration of the Nāyaka line of Tanjore. His diplomatic triumph resulted in the commission entrusted to Veṅkāji or Ekōji, half-brother of Śivāji, to expel Aḷagiri and crown Cheṅgamala Dāsa. Another version of the story is that he was taken to the court of Bijāpūr even in 1673 after the tragic fall of Vijayarāghava.

VEŅKAJI'S EARLY LIFE

Veṅkāji, son of Shāhji and Tukā Bāi was born about 1630, and was not much younger than Śivāji, assuming that the latter was born in the same year.¹ In 1658 he captured Śrīśailam² and accompanied

1. Bal Krishna, *op. cit.*, 180-81; K. R. Subramanian, *The Maratha Rajas of Tanjore*, 19

2. Bal Krishna, 144

his father to Poona and its environs in 1663.¹ In the following year Shāhji died and left his Karnāṭak *jāghīr* to Venkājī,² whose inheritance was confirmed by the Ādil Shāh.³ In 1665 he fought with conspicuous bravery on the side of his master against Jai Singh and Śivājī.⁴ The early career of Venkājī, unlike that of Śivājī, came under the full control and complete influence of his father. Shāhji in the early part of his life was an opportunist and king-maker, but his allegiance to Bijāpūr was steady, in spite of his self-assertion on two occasions. Similarly, Venkājī, though loyal to the Ādil Shāh, seized the Tanjore principality contrary to the wishes of his master. Further, the cultural traditions of Vijayanagar developed by Shāhji at Bangalore were continued by Venkājī at Tanjore to some extent, and he deserves credit for preparing the ground for the cultural efflorescence under his successor Shāhji II (1685-1712). In many ways Venkājī followed in the footsteps of his father, and there is a striking similarity between the Karnāṭak careers of both. On the whole, Venkājī acquitted himself as a worthy son of Shāhji and was cast in a heroic mould, though he cannot stand comparison with Śivājī.

CONQUEST OF TANJORE, 1675

The career of Venkājī was comparatively uneventful till his conquest of Tanjore. Though his father had weakened Tanjore by his invasions between 1659 and 1662 and prepared the way for the triumph of Venkājī, the conquest of Tanjore as such stands to his credit, and he effected it more than ten years after his father's death. Alagiri Nāyaka was alive to the danger which threatened

1. *Ibid.*, 159

2. *Ibid.*, 157

3. S. N. Sen, *Śiva Chhatrapati*, 231

4. J. N. Sarkar, *Shivaji and His Times* (5th edition, 1952), 128 & 307

him and made careful preparations to meet Veṅkāji, whose progress suffered arrest. He remained for a year on the borders of the kingdom, awaiting a favourable opportunity. In the meantime, the adherents of Veṅkaṇṇa seem to have executed their part of the scheme faithfully and with success. Alagiri had completely estranged his master, and his subjects were ready for a bold stroke of policy. Accordingly, Veṅkāji marched to Tanjore and laid siege to it. Alagiri realised his distressing position and humbly appealed to Chokkanātha for help, but the latter remained obdurate and would not forget or forgive his Viceroy's misconduct. Veṅkāji captured the fort on the first attack, and Alagiri is said to have fled to Mysore. According to the chronicles, Veṅkāji marched into the kingdom of Tanjore, captured the fort of Aiyampēṭ and routed Alagiri in a pitched battle. The latter withdrew to Tanjore. Receiving no help from Chokkanātha, suspecting treachery from his own men, and finding Veṅkāji attack the fort of Tanjore, he lost courage and fled with his family and faithful followers at night to Mysore by way of Ariyalūr. Andre Freire's account is as follows: "Idal Khan, informed of these events (at Tanjore) sent an army under the command of General Ekōji to re-establish, on the throne of Tanjore, the son (grandson) of the defeated king (Vijayarāghava), who had gone to implore his help. The Nāyaka of Madura had entrusted the command of the conquered kingdom to his elder brother (foster-brother, Alagiri Nāyaka), whose bravery at first checked the impetuosity of Ekōji. The latter resolved to contrive by stratagem a victory which he did not dare to hope by force; he remained, for one full year, on the frontiers of the kingdom, convinced that follies and mutual jealousies between the two brothers would afford him a favourable moment to accomplish his designs. He was not mistaken in his

expectation. The Nāyaka of Madura soon fell out with his brother, and Ekōjī, profiting by this division, marched at the head of his troops, fell on the town of Tanjore, and, in the first attack, captured it and all its dependencies and appeared before the gates of Trichinopoly where the king of Madura was. The citadel and all the kingdom would have been his conquest if his boldness had equalled his good fortune. He feared to compromise his success by delivering the assault immediately; and this hesitation gave the Nāyaka time to recover from the panic which had demoralised him. He could defend himself and save his capital, but he was deprived of a large part of his dominions and of all the strong places in his provinces.....This is what has just happened at Tanjore. General Ekōjī, instead of placing the son (grandson) of the late Nāyaka on the throne, according to the orders of Idal Khān, has preferred to usurp the title and authority of an independent king.”¹ The last sentence of the extract may imply that Veṅkāji's conquest and usurpation synchronised, but in the letter the fact of usurpation is separated from his conquest of Tanjore and his activities against Trichinopoly. Therefore his usurpation must have taken place some time after his conquest of Tanjore. Moreover, all the chronicles agree that Cheṅgamala Dāsa was made king of Tanjore (1675) and that Veṅkāji usurped the throne later (1676). In accordance with the instructions he had received from the Ādil Shāh, Veṅkāji crowned Cheṅgamala Dāsa. It is said that his foster-mother showed the place where the treasures of Vijayarāghava had been buried and that a sum amounting to 26 lakhs in *pagōḍas* and jewels was found. Liberal gifts were made to Veṅkāji and others who had espoused his cause, besides the revenues of

certain districts to cover the expenses of his expedition. Subsequently he is said to have retired with his army to Kumbakonam and received the revenue from it for the maintenance of his army.¹

VEŅKĀJĪ'S USURPATION, 1676

The reign of Cheṅgamala Dāsa did not begin well, according to the chronicles. Persuaded by his nurse he appointed the merchant of Negapatam, who had protected him during his exile, as his Daḷavāy and Pradhāni, with the result that Rāyasam Veṅkaṇṇa was mightily displeased, and he plotted the ruin of his new master. He contacted Veṅkājī at Kumbakonam, egged on his ambition, and assured him that he could seize power without a fight. Returning to Tanjore, he terrified the king by an exaggerated account of Veṅkājī's plans, and Cheṅgamala Dāsa and his followers left Tanjore and took refuge at Ariyalūr. Subsequently he reconciled himself with Veṅkājī, and joined Kīḷavan Sētupati against Madura.² My reference to this in my *History of the Nayaks of Madura* is overlooked by one writer who consequently makes a misstatement.³ Veṅkājī seized the reins of government without any effort and, with the hearty co-operation of Veṅkaṇṇa, restored peace and order in the kingdom. But he lacked faith in the constancy of Veṅkaṇṇa's loyalty as he had betrayed Aḷagiri and Cheṅgamala Dāsa. Therefore he thought of imprisoning him, but the unscrupulous king-maker got scent of his impending fate and left Tanjore stealthily, cursing his stars. The Jesuit letter of 1676 records only the fact of Veṅkājī's usurpation and does not detail the circumstances

1. *Nayaks*, 168-69

2. *Nayaks*, 198

3. Vriddhagirisān, *op. cit.*, 167, f.n. 13

leading to it; as that event is stated to have "just happened", it must have happened in the same year. Veṅkāji's administration at the beginning is described as follows in the same letter: "Thus becoming absolute master of the kingdom, he seeks to make himself loved by the inhabitants, and has already succeeded in it. The justice and wisdom of his government begin to heal the wounds of the preceding reign and develop the natural resources of this country, one of the most remarkable in all India by the fertility of its lands and the richness of its production. By repairing the canals and tanks, he has fertilised extensive fields, uncultivated for many years, and the last harvest has surpassed all that one had ever seen. Unhappily this prosperity will not be of long duration, for, on the one hand, Idal Khān sends an army to punish the revolt of his general; on the other, the Nāyaka of Madura, so sluggish when it would have been easy for him to join his brother to crush Ekōji, is at last waking himself up from his apathy. He is raising a formidable army in agreement with his vassals, who have forgotten their own quarrels to unite their forces against the common enemy. At the same time, Mysore, who cannot see without uneasiness a bold set of people establishing themselves on her own frontiers, fortifies the citadels she has taken from the northern provinces of Madura, gathers fresh troops, and makes great preparations for war. On the pretext of strengthening herself against the Muhammadans, she may have in view an attack on the kingdom of Madura, when the Nāyaka will be involved in his war with Tanjore."¹ Veṅkāji is eulogised as a warrior-statesman, who modelled his administration of Tanjore on that of Bangalore and Kōlār by his father; he studied "with assiduity the internal economy of his state with a success

that enriched his subjects and ennobled his name." (Col. Mackenzie, 1815).¹ Veṅkāji usurped the throne of Tanjore in consequence of the incapacity of the boy-prince to organise an orderly administration. In order to strengthen himself against his enemies, he endeavoured to conclude an alliance with the French for their assistance, including their expected fleet, and promised them places accordingly.²

ŚIVĀJĪ'S COROMANDEL OBJECTIVE: PARTITION

The Chitṇīs Bakhar emphasises the claim of Śivāji to a moiety of Shāhji's *jāghīrs* in the Karṇātak: "Thirteen years have passed since the death of the late Mahārāja. Raghunāth Paṇṭ then placed you at the head of the government and completely rendered to you all the belongings of the late Mahārāja—his jewels, horses, elephants and land. But they are my patrimony as well. You have till today enjoyed my half share of them; I wanted to demand it of you but I had been far away. As you would not relinquish it voluntarily, I waited for these twelve or thirteen years. In my mind I argued that you were also a son of the Mahārāja and a rightful owner of the property. So I let you enjoy it as long as you would, and I thought I would demand and get my share whenever I need (*sic.*) it and was at leisure. However, I came to Bhāgānagar for an interview with the Kuṭb Shāh for some diplomatic reasons, from thence I came to Karṇātak. Coming to this I have captured Jīñji. I have taken possession of the territories on the banks of the Varuṇā. Sher Khān came to fight me, he was completely routed and I annexed what territories he had. I then came to the banks of the Kāvērī and thence wrote to you."³ On the

1. *J.A.S.B.*, XIII, 457

2. Kaepelin, *op. cit.*, 159

3. Sen, *Śiva Chhatrapati*, 227-28

expedition was not such that he could think of an alternative line of defence. Though Jīñji sustained the Marāṭhās under Rājārām for a few years, they ultimately fell back on Mahārāshṭra.

REVIVAL OF VIJAYANAGAR

This theory is based on Śivāji's silver plate record to the widow and two sons of Śrīraṅga III, donating "probably a hundred villages"¹ and on his issue of a unique gold coin, *hon*, discovered at Phaltan, in imitation of the *pagōḍa* of Vijayanagar. But these epigraphical and numismatic evidences merely show Śivāji's humanity towards the family of an emperor who had come to grief and his submission to the numismatic tradition of Vijayanagar. The genuineness of the inscription is not above suspicion. We cannot expect Śivāji to imitate the Mughal rupee in preference to the Vijayanagar *pagōḍa*. It is further stated that he cherished "the ambition to stand before Aurangzīb as the acknowledged successor of the emperors of Vijayanagar.....His southern invasion had in it an idea of reviving the Hindu empire of the south".² It is also said that the death of Śrīraṅga III "had something to do with the coronation of Śivāji."³ All these speculations were caused mostly by the then uncertainty of the date of Śrīraṅga's death, but we now know definitely that he died in 1672. If Śivāji had really wanted to step into the place of Śrīraṅga, he would have postponed his coronation, which actually took place in 1674, or recrowned himself in 1678 after his Coromandel expedition. Moreover, we are told as follows: "Whether the idea dawned upon him (Raghunāth Nārāyaṇ Hanu-mantē) that the disappearance of the empire of

1. *Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume*, 137

2. *Nayaks*, 177 n & 134 n

3. *Ibid*, 27

Vijayanagar opened a new vista of imperial ambition may well be doubted, though it does not seem improbable if Gāgā Bhaṭṭ could entertain a similar idea that led to Śivāji's coronation.....Śivāji had now crowned himself king. At least some of the Mahratta Bakhairs give indications of their not having been unaware of a kingdom going by default in the south, now that the empire of Vijayanagar had passed into the unknown. There might have been that ambition in Śivāji of creating for himself a kingdom, which he could maintain in independence and out of reach of the arms of the Mughals. If Gāgā Bhaṭṭ could think of it, as the Sabhāsad Bakhair makes it clear, it might as well have dawned upon himself and upon Raghunāth Nārāyaṇ Hanumantē.¹ The Sabhāsad Bakhar mentions Gāgā Bhaṭṭa's conviction that Śivāji deserved to be a Chhatrapati like the Muslim Bādshāh and gives no support to the theory of the revival of Vijayanagar by Śivāji.² It is clear that there was a political vacuum in the Eastern Karnāṭak which Śivāji abhorred and that he wanted to carve a principality out of the chaotic political units. The grant made to the children of Śrīraṅga might even contradict any idea of revival; a puppet emperor (either Tirumala Rāya or Rāma Rāya, sons of Śrīraṅga) would not be cut off with a shilling as was done by Śivāji in his silver plate grant. In this connection we may refer to the statement of Cosme da Guarda that, on the eve of the acquisition of Rāigaḍ by Śivāji, he told its Governor that he need not have any scruples to betray the fort, because his master (Sultān of Bijāpūr) had been faithless to his overlord, the emperor of Vijayanagar: "None need keep faith with him who did not keep faith with his natural

1. J. I. H., X., 103 & 107

2. Sen, *Śiva Chhatrapati*, 114

sovereign, the Emperor of Bisnagar, against whom Vizapur, Golconda and others had rebelled, and not contented with that, carried their arms against him till he was totally ruined. I declared that my principal task was to avenge this injury and may God favour me in all my intentions".¹ Like Da Guarda, Manucci and Fryer laboured under the delusion that Bijāpūr and Gōlkoṇḍa were tributaries to Rāmarāja the Great. Even accepting the statement of Da Guarda that Śivājī wanted to punish those Sultanates, we cannot regard it as evidence of his ambition to revive the empire of Vijayanagar but only as an excuse for Śivājī's conquest of the Eastern Kaṇṇāṭak, based on a wrong assumption.

SARDESAI'S VIEW

Mr. G. S. Sardesai's suggestion that Śivājī aimed at destroying the feudal obligations of Venkājī to Bijāpūr and bringing him under his own political control is a part and parcel of his theory that Śivājī soared high above a pan-Marāṭhā ideal and struggled hard for the establishment of the Hindu-pad-Pādshāhi. In other words, Śivājī did not confine his vision of freedom to Mahārāshṭra, but pursued a pan-Hindu ideal. He regards his Kaṇṇāṭak expedition as a link "in the grand unifying chain of imperial aims." He advances nine arguments in support of his thesis: (1) Śivājī's coronation titles like *Kshatriya-Kulāvatamsa*, *Simhāsanādhiśvara*, *Śrī Śiva Chhatrapati*, and *Gō-Brahmaṇa-pratipālaka*; the motto on his seal containing expressions like ever-growing, commanding obedience from the world, and shining forth for the good of the world; his acceptance of Marāṭhī as the court language; his revival of an old institution like the Council of

1. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji* (1927), 25-26

Ashtapradhān; Sanskritisation of the designations of the Pradhāns; his position as a Varnāśramite, etc. (2) His method of territorial expansion by *chauth* and *sārdeshmukhi* (3) His friendly attitude towards Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh and his letter to the latter expounding his pan-Hindu ideal, coupled with his goodwill towards Mādanna Paṇṭ (4) His letter to Aurangzib on religious toleration (5) His letter to Mālōji Ghōrpadē for united action (6) His visit to Agra (7) His Karnāṭak expedition (8) His marriage with eight ladies (9) Ratnākar Bhaṭ's eulogy of Jai Singh in Sanskrit verse, referring to his triumph over Śivāji and others who "coveted the imperial throne of Delhi."¹

As regards the titles of Śivāji, they are characteristic of a Hindu ruler, and he could not be expected to assume non-Hindu titles. The motto on his seal is referable to the infancy of his power, and the world mentioned is the limited world witnessing his activities: Marāṭhī as the court language would be suited to a pan-Marāṭhā ideal. The Council of eight ministers cannot be regarded as the revival of an ancient institution like Daśaratha's Council, because the Bahmanis had a Council of Eight. Śivāji's Council grew from four before 1647 to eight in 1674; it was no slavish imitation of any prototype, ancient or mediaeval; and a policy of deliberate archaism would be foreign to his genius and practical-mindedness. Secondly, *chauth* and *sārdeshmukhi* became instruments of political expansion later, and Śivāji contemplated only a well-knit kingdom, to which alone the Ashtapradhān Council was suited, and not an empire which was planned later from the days of Bājī Rāo. Thirdly, the theory of a Marāṭhā-Rājput *entente* is based on a letter of Śivāji to Jai Singh in

Persian verse, containing extravagant anti-Muslim sentiments and raising the slogan of the country and religion in danger¹, and the genuineness of the letter has been questioned by Mr. C. V. Vaidya, partly on the ground that Jai Singh was neither patriotic nor religious. Fourthly, Śivājī's letter² to Aurangzib, protesting against the re-imposition of the *jizya* in 1679, can be no evidence of his pan-Hindu ideal because he could not be expected to claim religious freedom for Marāṭhās alone. Fifthly, his letter to Mālōji Ghōrpadē decisively proves that Śivājī's ideal was pan-Marāṭhā, not pan-Hindu; in 1677 he wrote to him as follows from Haidarabad: "My father's uppermost idea was that whatever power he possessed should be utilised in raising the status of those Marāṭhā jāghirdārs who were scattered about in search of livelihood, that they should attain distinction and power in managing the affairs of state.....Your father forgetting all the good that my father had done him sided with Mustāfā Khān in capturing him.....My people killed your father in a fight.....Now has arrived the occasion for rectifying the past mistakes.....You know how keen I have been in consolidating the Marāṭhā power by bringing together all the scattered elements for a united action."³ When Shāhji's work had not been completed and when Marāṭhā unity had not been achieved in 1677, would a statesman like Śivājī have formulated a pan-Hindu ideal? Sixthly, Śivājī's visit to Agra should not be regarded as in furtherance of a Marāṭhā-Rājput *entente cordiale*; his aim must have been to gain an inside knowledge of Mughal politics so that it could be utilised for his defensive struggle with the imperial power. Seventhly, his Karnāṭak expedition

1. *Shivaji Souvenir* (1927), 172-78

2. Sarkar, *op. cit.*, 320-23

3. *Shivaji Souvenir*, 146-49

was intended to end the anarchy on the Coromandel coast and make its conquest and annexation contribute to the strength of the Marāṭhā opposition to Aurangzib, with whom further struggles would be inevitable. Eighthly, all the ladies he married belonged to Mahārāshṭra and the marriages were obviously intended to unite the Kshatriyas of the Western Deccan. Lastly, the Sanskrit eulogy is a poetic imagery, and a sane Śivāji would not knock his head against the granite wall of Mughal strength. Therefore Sardesai's theory is obviously untenable, while some of his arguments support the opposite view that Śivāji's ideal was pan-Marāṭhā.

ANNEXATION

Sabhāsad says that "the Rāja entertained in his heart the desire of conquering the Karnāṭak from the Tuṅgabhadra valley to the Kāvēri."¹ That annexation was the central objective of Śivāji's Coromandel expedition is clear from Martin's *Memoirs*, the Jesuit letters, and the English Factory Records. From Martin's *Memoirs* we learn that Śivāji organised the government of Pondicherry, that he employed a large number of civilians, and that the reclamation of waste lands was undertaken in the conquered country: "Sivagy assured our envoy that we might stay in complete security at Pondicherry without taking the side of either party....., that he would send an *avalдар* in a few days to govern Pondicherry, and that we might have to live with him in the same manner as we had done with the officers of Chircam (Sher Khān Lōḍi)²..... Sivagy sent some Bramens to all the villages in the country for governing them; the number of these scamps who had followed Sivagy for trying to get some employment is something amazing; they counted more

1. Sen, *Shiv Chhatrapati*, 199

2. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 278

than twenty thousand¹.....The Bramens were more careful in making the lands profitable than those under the government of the Mahomettans had appeared (to us) to be. A number of places around Pondicherry covered with brambles and brushwood only, of which nobody thought (anything) was reclaimed, and these have produced well since, but the best part of these improvements went to the profit of the Bramens."² Moreover, Śivāji did not fulfil his promise to the Sultān of Gōl-konḍa that he would get a share of the conquests. Though Martin's account emphasises the unscrupulous spoliation of the Marāṭhās, even of the property of the Hindu *Pandārams* (religious mendicants), there is no mistaking the territorial ambition of Śivāji. The letter of Bombay to the Company, dated 16-1-1678 states: "Sevagee Raja, carried on by an ambitious desire to bee fam'd a mighty conquerour, left Rairi.....at the latter end of the last faire Montzoone."³ Śivāji's definite territorial policy is further supported by his letter to Langhorne, Governor of Fort St. George, containing a request for a loan of engineers: "Since my arrivall into the Cornat country, I have conquered severall Forts and Castles and do allso intend to build new workes in severall Forts and Castles."⁴ Sabhāsad records that one hundred forts were built by Śivāji.⁵ Above all, André Freire, writing from Vīraṇāmūr in the Jīñji Taluk in 1678 says: "Śivāji made himself master of it (Vellore), and thereby became sovereign of a large part of the kingdom (of Vijayanagar), as he had already been (master) of Jīñji. He could not hope to maintain peaceful possession of it for long; he had to defend himself against the Moghul power, which has been

1. *Ibid.*, 297

2. *Ibid.*, 341

3. *English Records on Shivaji*, II, 149

4. *Ibid.*, 137

5. *Sen, Śiva Chhatrapati*, 127

irresistible till now. With this prevision he applied all the energy of his mind and all the resources of his dominions to the fortification of the principal towns. He constructed new ramparts around Jiñji, dug ditches, erected towers, created basins, and executed all these works with a perfection which European art would not have denied. He did as much for the other citadels, whose position promised real advantages, destroyed all those which he considered useless; constructed a large number of new ones in the plains and on the hills and put all these fortresses in a state of preparedness for a siege of several years. Such works necessarily exhausted his treasures."¹ To conclude, the attempt to discover Śivāji's ulterior motives is a wild-goose chase; partition was a stalking-horse; plunder was a side issue; his palpable objective was the conquest and administration of the Eastern Karnāṭak in order to strengthen his own military and political position.

THE PRIME MOVER IN THE BUSINESS

According to the 91—Qami Bakhar, Raghunāth Nārāyaṇ Hanumantē went to Mādanna Paṇṭ after he had quarelled with his master Veṅkāji and discussed with him the invasion of the Bijāpūri Karnāṭak and of Veṅkāji's kingdom. Then he proceeded to Śivāji, accepted service under him and persuaded him to demand a partition of his father's Karnāṭak *jāghirs*, his object being to take vengeance on his late master. Thereupon Śivāji decided upon invading the Karnāṭak. This account making Raghunāth the prime mover in the business is not supported by Sabhāsad.² No doubt Raghunāth co-operated with Śivāji in his expedition and was made Viceroy of Jiñji after its conquest.

1. Bertrand, III. 271

2. Sen, *op.cit.*, 119

His ability and scholarship are unquestionable; his plan was the limited one of teaching Venkājī a lesson, but Śivājī's expedition was a great affair. The arguments for partition could not be convincing. Raghunāth is said to have met Śivājī during his illness at Sātāra early in 1676. But, according to a French letter from Sūrat dated 20-12-1675, Śivājī's minister Anājī Paṇṭ told M. Baron near Rājāpūr that an expedition to the Karṇāṭak had been contemplated by his master. "Baron stopped for some time at Rājāpūr, where he had friendly interviews with his principal minister, understood therefore his ambition on the Karṇāṭak, and arrived at Sūrat on 26 August, 1675 after a voyage of three months."¹ Therefore the Karṇāṭak expedition must have been decided upon in Śivājī's council early in 1675. Consequently its origin must be ascribed to a date one year earlier than Raghunāth's visit to Śivājī. Though Raghunāth could not be the originator of the expedition, its details must have been worked out with his minute knowledge of the Karṇāṭak affairs. Martin regards Mādanna Paṇṭ as its author.² He invited Śivājī "to render some service to his religion;"³ his object was "to put a part of Carnate under Hindu domination and to make himself a powerful protector of Sivagy by virtue of the facilities that he gave him to make himself the master of it; and perhaps they had still more far-reaching designs."⁴ The Fort St. George letter of 19-6-1677 says that Śivājī was "called in by the King of Golconda or Maddana to help them to take Chengy, Vealour.....as farr as Porto Novo, out of the Visiapours hands, with the title of Generalissimo."⁵ This is only

1. Kaepelin, *op. cit.*, 155

2. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 291

3. *Ibid.*, 262

4. *Ibid.*, 264

5. *English Records on Shivaji*, II, 125

a guess; neither Martin nor Langhorne was in a position to know the truth. Therefore Śivāji deserves the full credit for the conception and development of the scheme, though Raghunāth Nārāyaṇ Hanumantē substantially assisted in the details of its execution and though Mādanna wholeheartedly supported it.

ŚIVĀJI-VEŢKĀJI COLLISION

André Freire's letter of 1678 runs as follows; "After subduing the kingdom of Jiñji, the new conqueror (Śivāji) pretends to respect the provinces possessed by his brother (half-brother) and advances as if to pay a friendly visit to him. Ekōji, full of confidence, comes jovially to meet him and finds him beyond the Coleroon, three leagues from Tanjore. But natural sentiments are suppressed by greed and ambition; the traitor seizes his brother and puts him in chains to extort from him all the treasures (he has) gathered from the exploitation of the kingdom of Tanjore. Ekōji having managed to escape, crosses the river swimming and hides himself in the woods; Sabagi (Śivāji) recompenses himself by taking possession of all the provinces north of the Coleroon. Then he entrusts most of his army to one of his brothers Santōgi (Santāji, illegitimate son of Shāhji), the most valiant captain in all these countries, gives him a Brāhmaṇ as counsellor, whose sagacity and experience equal his devotion, entrusts him with the defence of his conquests, and flees to the north to help his son, (who is) severely pressed by the troops of the Great Moghul. Ekōji, profiting by this diversion to re-establish his affairs, gathers his soldiers, crosses the river, and enters the territory of Jiñji. Santōgi comes to give him battle at the head of an army, superior in number and commanded by clever and intrepid captains; but he attacks men whose wives he has dishonoured and whose children he has massacred in the

sack of Jīñji; the desire for vengeance increases their natural courage; actuated by fury, they fall on the enemy's army like lions, break the ranks, spread carnage everywhere and turn the victory to their side. But, all on a sudden, art and stratagem snatch away the victory from blind courage. Santōgī obliged to flee, keeps enough composure to place a big detachment in ambuscade; the victors carried away by the dash of success fall into the snare; overtaken on the rear by this detachment, they suddenly see the fugitives turn against them with irresistible impetuosity. After a bloody combat of several hours they are broken, and they leave the battlefield and the honour of victory to Santōgī, whose losses are nevertheless much more considerable than those of the conquered. While the two armies were fighting, the Nāyaka of Madura came with his troops against Ekōjī. The occasion was opportune to capture Tanjore, but he did not know how to take advantage of it. The defeated recrossed the Coleroon under his eyes and returned in disorder to their fortress. Instead of attacking them, or entering the town along with them, to impose his law there, he wasted his time in hesitation; then he joined Santōgī, who promised to hand over to him the citadel and all the kingdom of Tanjore in return for a sum of money for the maintenance of his army. But Ekōjī, whose treasure was in a better condition to satisfy the cupidity of Śabāgi, made peace with him and retained possession of his dominions."¹

This letter represents Venkāji as the victim of his half-brother's ambition, diplomacy and cupidity. After his escape from the clutches of Śivāji, and after the latter's departure from the Coromandel coast, he fought with Santāji impetuously and almost succeeded, when

by stratagem the latter's defeat was converted into a Pyrrhic victory. As he was further confronted with the hostility of Chokkanātha Nāyaka, Venkāji came to terms with Śivāji. The contents of the letter agree remarkably well with other sources except in a few cases, which may be considered here.

CAPTURE OF JIŪJI

According to the Jesuit letter "it was reported that Śabāgī....., in revolt against his sovereign for some time, had seized several provinces of Bisnagar and advanced at the head of a strong army. This news appeared incredible; how to believe that Śabāgī could traverse a distance of several hundreds of leagues through (the country of) the warlike people of the Deccan and Gōlkoṇḍa to carry war into our country? While the probability of this rumour was argued about, Śabāgī solved the question by falling, like a thunderbolt, on the citadel of JiŪji, which he took at the first assault. He owed this easy success to the divisions which prevailed and to the numerous communications which he had carefully conducted with the Mahammadans"¹ But Bhimsen says that JiŪji was captured by treachery.² Manucci however attributes Śivāji's success to his "valour and determination."³ The letters of Fort St. George do not support the charge of treachery. Martin's account is as follows: "Nasirmamet (Nasir Muhammad of JiŪji), who only sought the means of preventing Chircam (Sher Khān of Vālikoṇḍapuram) from rendering himself the master of Gingy, did not make any alteration to the terms and got ready to receive Sivagy to whom he sent ambassadors as soon

1. *Ibid.*, 269

2. Patwardhan and Rawlinson, *Source Book of Maratha History* (1929), I, 168

3. *Ibid.*, 182

as he learnt that he was in Carnate."¹ This is to be taken with a grain of salt. The Jesuit account appears to be full and true.

ŚIVĀJĪ'S TREATMENT OF VEŅKĀJĪ

André Freire speaks of the treacherous imprisonment of Veṅkājī, his escape, and Śivājī's seizure of the country to the north of the Coleroon, which was entrusted to Santājī and a Brāhmaṇ adviser (Raghunāth Paṇḍ). Sabhāsad says that Veṅkājī's flight was due to his fear that Śivājī might employ force in securing from him the twelve badges of honour bequeathed by Shāhjī.² Martin observes: "The first conversation gave evidence of amity and tenderness only, then it came to negotiations when Ecugy discovered that his brother would not let him go unless he had satisfied him about his claims. He also used his cunning and while he offered friendly words he sought some means of withdrawing himself from such a bad strait, he succeeded therein one night, he had a *cattamaron* (raft) kept ready for him on the banks of the Couleron under pretext of necessity, for he was watched, he approached the banks of the river, threw himself into the *cattamaron* and crossed to the other side which was his country and where he had some troops. On receipt of the information which was given to Sivagy he caused Ecugy's men who were in his camp to be arrested, among them (was) one Jagarnatpendit (Jagannāth Paṇḍit), a Bramen who commanded the troops of his (Śivājī's) brother, a man of courage and ability. The brothers did not meet again since, however, Sivagy took possession of a part of the lands of Gingy which belonged to Ecugy, but it would have cost him more if

1. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 264-65

2. Sen, *Siva Chhatrapati*, 126

he had remained in the Camp.”¹ According to Sabhāsad, “the Raje learnt the news that Vyankājī Rāja had fled. Thereupon he wondered (saying): Why has he fled? Was I going to imprison him? What should I do with the *birandes* (badges of honour)? My own *birandes* have spread over the eight directions. Over the seagirt earth my fame has spread, what then should I do with those *birandes*? I had asked for them as one should have his patrimony. If he did not like to part with them, he was at liberty not to give them. Why did he flee for nothing? He is young, very young, and he has acted like a child.”² A Fort St. George record says that Śivājī “waxed very angry and bad him (Venkājī) begone”³. Though the Jesuit reference to the imprisonment of Venkājī is not confirmed, it is clear that a few of his followers were taken into custody and that his territory north of the Coleroon was annexed by Śivājī.

PYRRHIC VICTORY

The Jesuit version is corroborated by other accounts. Sabhāsad says: “A bloody battle ensued. By virtue of the king’s righteousness and good luck Hambirrao defeated Vyankājī”.⁴ Martin remarks: “A great battle was fought on the 26th of this month (November, 1677) between the armies of Sivagy and Ecugy. It was the latter who commenced it, the *melee* was severe for the people of these parts, many were killed and wounded, among those were some men of importance. The two parties retreated and the loss was almost equal.”⁵ In other words, it was a drawn battle. Fort St. George to Surat, dated 20 and 29, Novem-

1. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 303-4

2. Sen, *Siva Chhatrapati*, 126

3. *English Records on Shivaji*, II, 132

4. Patwardhan and Rawlinson, *op.cit.*, 129

5. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 317

ber 1677, describes the engagement: "The battell held from morning till night in which Santogee was worsted and fled three-quarters of one of these leagues, being pursued one one-fourth of a league. When being return'd to their severall camps, Santogee, consulting with his Captains what the importance and shame would bee, resolved to dress and saddle their horse again, and so immediately rode away by other wayes, and in the dead of the night surprised them fast at rest after soe hard labour, their horses unsaddled, and made a great slaughter" of them.¹

SIEGE OF VELLORE

The siege of Vellore lasted for a year, according to the Jesuit writer, but it went on for about fourteen months. Another inaccuracy in the Jesuit statement is that Santāji rejoined Śivāji at Vellore. Still the Jesuit letter of 1678 possesses very great historical value, and it should have been included in Dr. Sen's *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*.

VINDICATION OF VENKĀJI

Venkāji is described as "no unworthy brother of Shivāji," as one who has been the victim of "the deliberate falsification of history by later Marāṭhā writers."² This vindication is based on André Freire's letter of 1676 praising "the justice and wisdom of his government."³ At the same time it is said that "becoming absolute master of the kingdom, he seeks to make himself loved by the inhabitants."⁴ In other words, Venkāji attempted to stabilise his usurpation by a prudent policy of agricultural improvement. Moreover, the vindication

1. *English Records on Shivaji*, II, 146

2. Sarkar, *op.cit.*, 307

3. Bertrand, III, 249

4. *Ibid.*

in question does not consider the deterioration in Veṅkāji's reputation for civil administration, dilated upon in the Jesuit records. André Freire's letter of 1678 refers to "the treasures (he has) gathered from the exploitation of the kingdom of Tanjore,"¹ to his treasure which was "in a better condition (than that of Chokkanātha) to satisfy the cupidity of Śabāgi",² and to the fact that "for her part, Tanjore, pressed by Ekōji, had to contribute the sum which this prince had paid to buy his dominions back (from Śivāji.)"³ That the vindication under survey is one-sided is palpable from the Jesuit accounts of Veṅkāji's maladministration. André Freire's letter of 1682 gives the following picture: "I shall say little about Tanjore; the tyranny of Ekōji continues his work of destruction there. After plundering the men, he has fallen on the *pagōḍas* of his own idols. One had never seen so much temerity in a pagan, but he is a pagan who has no other god than his cupidity. To satisfy it he has appropriated the treasures of the *pagōḍas* and their large possessions. The Brāhmaṇs came in vain to lament and represent to him that their gods were abandoned without offerings, because the rice-fields, whose produce was intended for their worship, had been taken away from them. He replied to them that the gods did not eat rice and that offerings of fragrant flowers would suffice. It can be judged from this how Ekōji treats his unhappy subjects. To his tyranny are added other disasters. An inundation, less strong in the interior of the country than that of 1677, has wrought horrible ravages on the sea-coast, because it has been accompanied by a terrible gust of wind which, carrying the sea beyond its limits, has turned back the waters of

1. *Ibid.*, 269

2. *Ibid.*, 271

3. *Ibid.*, 272

the rivers. In the villages of the sea-coast alone, more than 6,000 persons have been the victims of this disaster.....I am much afraid lest a sad experience should teach them what the example of our three Nāyaks ought to have done viz. that their real enemies are Ekōji and Sāmbōgi with their savage hordes”¹ Britto’s letter of 1683 describes the land revenue administration of Venkāji: “Ekōji takes off four-fifths of all the produce. As if this were not enough, he enforces payment in money, instead of accepting this four-fifths in kind; and as he is careful to fix the price himself, much above that which the owner can realise, it happens that the sale of the whole harvest is never sufficient to pay the contributions. Accordingly, the cultivators are burdened with a crushing debt and often they are obliged to prove their inability, when they have to pay, by submitting to barbarous tortures. It will be difficult for you to conceive of such oppression, and I must add, however, that, in the kingdom of Jiñji, tyranny is even more frightful and revolting.”² In this connection the following letter of Śivāji (perhaps his last) to Venkāji dated 1680 is illuminating: “Do not become a Bairāgi: Throw away despondency; attend to fasts, feasts and customary usages. Turn your attention to affairs of moment. Raghunāth is near you. Consult him on what is most advisable to be done. This is the time for performing great actions. Old age is the season for turning Bairāgi.”³ This letter was intended to remove Venkāji’s indifference to worldly affairs caused by his disappointments. His misrule may be attributed to his costly peace with Śivāji, to his melancholy and despondency, to the floods of 1677 and 1680, to his wars and to

1. *Ibid.*, 306-7

2. *Ibid.*, 338

3. Grant Duff, *op. cit.*, 226-27 n.

his territorial losses. No doubt the *bakharkārs* decry Veñkāji and glorify Śivāji and Raghunāth Paṇṭ. Though Raghunāth was a profound scholar and an officer of great ability, he was an inordinate lover of money and an authoritarian, a Dutch uncle, unfit to guide a prince of spirit like Veñkāji. Moreover, Veñkāji suffers in comparison with Śivāji, because while the one acquiesced in Muslim domination, the other was a Grand Rebel. A talented man is cast into the shade by a genius, who cannot be put down like the other.

CHAPTER V

The Vassalage of Vēṇād

VASSALAGE OF TRAVANCORE

The advocate-historian of Travancore makes the following sweeping statement: "Travancore was never subject to Vijayanagar or Madura. On the other hand, its kings possessed full political independence. Travancore knew to safeguard the interests of the state by appropriate measures of policy both internal and external."¹ A frontal attack on the statement is provided by Manuel Barradas who wrote from 'Cochin on 12th December 1616: "The great Naique of Madura.....has under him many kings and nobles as vassals, such as he of Travancor."² If Travancore was tributary to Madura in 1616, when did the vassalage commence? It is said that "it is only from the beginning of the 17th century that the Nāyak contact with Nāñcinād commenced."³ But in 1596 Fr. Pimenta who was in Travancore says that the king of Travancore had "certified to us that the king of Madura was coming against him with seventy thousand armed men and many elephants."⁴ In 1599 the Archbishop of Goa, Frey Aleixo de Menezes, who was in Malabar, was unable to meet the king of Travancore because he was "at the frontier of his kingdom, defending it against the attacks of the Nayque of Madura."⁵ The victory of Madura over Travancore towards the close of the 16th

1. T. K. Velu Pillai, *The Travancore State Manual*, Vol. II (1940), 192

2. Sewell, *op.cit.*, 230

3. K. K. Pillay, *The Śvetndram Temple* (1953), 44-45

4. Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, 347

5. *Ibid.*

century may be inferred from the statement of Barradas. Moreover, the grant of villages in the Tiruvaḍi-rājya in 1598 indicates that the territory conquered from Travancore remained intact. The position of Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka II (1595-1601) with regard to Travancore was secure. The records in question are the Vellaṅguḍi Plates and the Padmanēri inscription of Veṅkaṭa I, both of 1598; the former records the gift of Vellaṅgolli, surnamed Vīrabhūpasamudram in Muḷli-nāḍu in Tiruvaḍi-dēśa to a number of Brāhmaṇs in 261 shares, at the instance of Vīra Kṛishṇa Nāyaka, and mentions Viśvanātha Nāyaka's conquest of many kings on the battlefield in the Tiruvaḍi country and his acquisition by force of the sovereignty over Madhurā-rājya; the latter records the grant of Padmanēri by Veṅkaṭa I to Brāhmaṇs at the request of Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka and states that Viśvanātha Nāyaka conquered in battle the Tiruvaḍi, the Pāṇḍya king, Vāṇādarāya and other kings and annexed their dominions.¹ The Kṛishṇāpuram Plates of Sadāśiva Rāya, dated 1567, describe Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka I (1564-72) as one "who, by his valour, deprived the insolent king of the Tiruvaḍi-rājya of the seven (component) parts (of his kingdom)."² Another record at Kṛishṇāpuram (Tinnevely District), dated Śaka 1485 (A.D. 1563), Krōdhana (A.D. 1565) mentions the gift of more than six villages in the Tiruvaḍi-dēśa by Kṛishṇappa Nāyaka.³ All this epigraphical evidence shows that a part of Travancore was in the possession of the Nāyakas of Madura, in spite of "the defeat" sustained by Viṭṭhala in 1558. We are told that "Viṭṭhala's aim was only partly attained. The defeat of his army in Travancore was practically equivalent to

1. *M.E.R.*, 1912, 76; 1906, 86 & 1909, 119

2. *E.I.*, IX, 328-42

3. *M.E.R.*, 1912, 76

the complete independence of this kingdom..... The success of the expedition of Viṭṭhala was not so great."¹ We are further told that the defeat of Viṭṭhala was caused by "a standard, in the centre of which the name of Jesus was painted."² Did this alleged defeat of an accidental character convert a tributary (of 1547, in which year Bhūtalavīra-Rāmavarman gifted away land³ on the birth-day of Viṭṭhala —star Rōhiṇī) into a non-tributary? Even if an affirmative answer is returned, we may say that the vassalage of Travancore recorded by Barradas must have been of at least fifty years' duration (1565-1616). I am not inclined in this connection to use the evidence of Fr. Peter Martin provided in his letter of 1st June, 1700, viz. that "the king of Travancore.....never overcame (his enemies) but once"⁴ (about 1696), because the reference may well be to Ravivarman, the then king of Travancore.

TIRUMALA NĀYAKA'S INVASION

Travancore was indisputably tributary to Madura in 1616. The *Sāhityaratnākara*⁵ (also known as *Raghunāthabhūpavijaya*) mentions the Chēra king as a participant in the hostilities culminating in the battle of Tōpūr, 1617. It goes without saying that he sustained the defeat along with the ruler of Madura. The relations between the two powers must have become strained in the period following that battle. The Kūniyūr Plates of Veṅkaṭa II, issued in accordance with the wishes of the prosperous and eminent ruler Tirumala, whose pedigree⁶ is given in the record, granted the village of Kūniyūr or Muttukrishṇapuram in the Vīravanallūr Māghāṇa, Muḷli-nāḍu, Tiruvaḍi-dēsa, in

1. Heras, *op.cit.*, 163

2. *Ibid.*, 162

3. 64 of 1896

4. Lockman, *op.cit.*, I, 368

5. edited by T. R. Chintamani (1932), 103

May-June, 1634.¹ The invasion of Travancore by Tirumala Nāyaka took place between October 1634 and March 1635, according to the edict of the king of Travancore. Therefore it was undertaken in the name of the Vijayanagar emperor,² not long after the issue of the Kūniyūr Plates. Obviously the cause of the invasion is non-payment of tribute, and in 1631 Uṇṇikēraja Varma ascended the throne. We cannot accept the opinion that, "in all probability, it was an act of wanton aggression. That the Nāyaks, as the heirs of the Vijayanagar Empire, were authorised to collect tribute from Travancore was probably employed as a pretext."³ It is strange we are told that Tirumala Nāyaka "looked upon the fertile plains of Nāñjināḍ with a wistful eye. In his dominions visitations of famine were of frequent occurrence. He wanted money for his magnificence and his extravagance. His general Rāmappayya, suspected of sedition and subsequently forgiven by his master, was anxious to vindicate his loyalty and retrieve his fortunes. He, thereupon, projected an expedition to the south with his eyes set on Nāñjināḍ which promised considerable booty."⁴

The Travancore royal edict runs as follows: "Whereas it has been represented to us at our residence at Kalkuḷam by the *nāttārs* (ryots) between Maṅgalam and Maṇakuḍi..... that the country is smitten by calamities, having had no cultivation of the *Kār* (Kanni) crop of 810 and that as *Piṣāṇam* (Kumbham) cultivation was not begun owing to the advent of Tirumal Nāyakkar's forces and as the crops raised.....suffered by blight, the ryots have not the wherewithal to begin fresh cultivation, we are pleased to command on this the 22nd day of the

1. *E.I.*, III, 236-58; *M.E.R.*, 1891, 6

2. *A.S.I.*, Report, 1911-12, 195

3. K. K. Pillay, *op.cit.*, 45

4. T. K. Velu Pillai, *op.cit.*, 191

month of Māsi in 810 that the levying of.....(taxes) be given up.....and that this fact.....be duly notified to the ryots of the said places in the southern portion of Nāñjināḍ North.”¹ Though the invasion is accepted as a fact, its success is questioned on the following grounds. It is said that Tirumala Nāyaka was worthless as a soldier, statesman or politician.² But we have seen his qualities as a soldier. Secondly, the evidence of the *Rāmappaiyan Ammānai* is belittled, but there is no questioning the general reliability of the ballad, which mentions the Nāñjināḍtutturai and Malaiyāḷa rāja³ as vassals of Madura. Therefore the following contention is untenable: “The conquest of the Malayāḷam country.....can mean nothing more than that the Madura army crossed the pass to this side of the Western Ghats. The Nāñjināḍ Rāja referred to cannot be the king of Travancore.”⁴ Thirdly, the *Iravikkutti-pillai-pāṭṭu* mentions the heroic death of Iravikkutti Pillai. “One of the subalterns of Iravikkutti proceeded to the enemy’s camp to claim the head of the hero which had been taken to Madura by Rāmappayyan’s orders. The doughty champion did recover it and place it before the Mahārāja.”⁵ Though the Tamil ballad is set aside, the ballad of South Travancore is utilised, and the rendition of Iravikkutti’s head indicates not the triumph of Travancore but the humanity of Madura after her victory. Dr. K. K. Pillay brings out clearly the following strong points: the value of “the Mudaliyār Manuscripts” containing a copy of the edict quoted above; the identity of the Nāñjināḍ Rāja with the ruler of Vēṇāḍ or Travancore; the absence of any reference to the victory of Travancore in the *Iravik-*

1. V. Nagam Aiyar, *The Travancore State Manual*, I, 302-3

2. *I.A.*, 1916, 186

3. *Rāmappaiyan Ammānai*, edited by C. M. Ramachandra Chettiar, 25

4. Velu Pillai, *op.cit.*, 189-90

5. *Ibid.*, 192

kuttipillai-pāttu, which is not a satisfactory source of history; and the close association of Tirumala Nāyaka with the Śuchindram temple.¹

For the success of Tirumala Nāyakā's invasion of Travancore I am inclined to adduce the following evidences. My first point is not strong, though it is of some value. It is an inscription recording a gift of land by Tirumala Nāyakā to the Āḷaḍiyūr (near Ambasamudram) temple dated 1635, soon after that invasion.² This grant may (*not* must) have been in commemoration of the victory over Travancore. But we are told that "an endowment to a temple and that, to one situated outside the place of belligerent operations, may signify a defeat as much as a victory, or neither."³ It is possible that a very pious king makes grants of land in expiation of his sins resulting in his defeat, but generally it is victories that are followed quickly by expressions of gratitude to the unseen forces. Therefore we cannot deny the probability of the historical significance of the Āḷaḍiyūr grant of Tirumala Nāyakā. My second point is stronger, and it relates to the evidence of the Tamil *Ammānai*, whose reference to sea-fights is confirmed by Portuguese records and Jesuit letters, and the Portuguese and the Dutch participated on opposite sides in Tirumala Nāyaka's campaign against the Sētupati. There is no doubt that the Tamil ballad is an important historical document in comparison with court *kāvyas* and *prāśastis*. Lastly, there is the testimony of John Nieuhoff proving the lasting effects of Tirumala Nāyaka's invasion of and victory over Travancore. In 1664, according to the Dutchman, the king of Travancore, "constantly keeps a garrison of ten thousand Negros (Nāyars) here to secure it (his capital)

1. K. K. Pillay, *op.cit.*, 45-47

2. *Nayaks*, 353

3. K. K. Pillay, *op.cit.*, 46

against the Nāyak of Madure, whose power is much dreaded here.....The king is by some styled the Great King, because he possesses larger territories than any other of the Malabar kings.....Some ascribe to him a superiority over neighbouring princes, but of this I am convinced to the contrary by my own experience; it is true they reverence him as a potent king, but pay him no obedience. Others will have him to be a vassal of the king of Narasingha."¹ Mr. Velu Pillai quotes only the first sentence of this extract.² It is hardly necessary to comment on the significance of the observations of Nieuhoff.

MAṄGAMMĀL'S PUNITIVE EXPEDITION

Chokkanātha Nāyaka's reign (1659-82) witnessed political storms too severe not to tax his slender abilities: Muslim and Marāṭhā invasions; wars with Ramnad, Mysore and Tanjore; and the usurpation of Rustam Khān in 1678. Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka III (1682-89) received the homage of Umayamma Rāṇi, Queen-Regent of Travancore (1677-84). With the accession of Ravivarman (1684-1718), the attitude of Travancore to Madura changed, and the Vaḍasēri (Agastīśvaram Taluk) inscription of 1697 records the remission of taxes to the people of Nāñjināḍ for thirteen years (1684-97) on account of the Nāyak invasions. The causes of Maṅgammāl's punitive expedition to Travancore are detailed in Fr. Peter Martin's letter of 1st June, 1700.³ No united action on the part of Travancore was possible against the invaders owing to the rebellious attitude of the eight ministers. Hence Ravivarman had to acquiesce in the sufferings of his country caused by the annual visitation of the Madura army. About 1696 he conceived a daring plan to free

1. *Nayaks*, 324

2. Velu Pillai, *op.cit.*, 192

3. Lockman, *op.cit.*, I, 367-70

himself at one stroke from the two perils which had been preying upon him, viz., the overbearing ministers and the ubiquitous invaders. The Baḍagas (Madura army) invaded Travancore as usual to exact the customary tribute and marched unopposed to Kalkuḷam, the capital and chief fort of the kingdom. Ravivarman adopted the dangerous policy of coming to an understanding with them by promising a part of his dominions and the fortress of Kalkuḷam in return for their assistance against the *Ettuvittil Pillamār* (eight ministers) who had deprived him of every shred of authority in his kingdom. He gave up the citadel, and with their help, murdered some of the ministers, the rest escaping or ransoming their lives. When the ministerial clique was thus destroyed, he became alive to the dangers attending on his expedient of entrusting his capital to his most powerful enemy. Without losing courage, he suddenly turned against the Baḍagas and laid siege to the fort, and they fled in confusion on account of the most unexpected blow, and most of them were pursued and massacred. Only a few survived to carry home the tale of the tragedy. So far we have followed Fr. Martin. Maṅgammāl's reaction to the tragedy was a punitive expedition about 1697, the story of which is narrated in the local chronicles. A large army was sent to Travancore under Daḷavāy Narasappaiya, who struggled hard, emerged victorious, and dictated his own terms. All arrears of tribute were collected; valuable presents of jewellery were received. The most remarkable of the trophies, highly prized by the Daḷavāy, were some pieces of ordnance, which were carefully numbered and preserved in the bastions of the Madura and Trichinopoly forts, but J. H. Nelson, author of *The Madura Country* (1868), did not succeed in his attempt to trace them.

Mr. Velu Pillai questions the historicity of Narasappaiya's invasion of Travancore on the following grounds: the local chronicles cannot be relied upon because the pieces of ordnance mentioned by them were not discovered by Nelson at Madura or Trichinopoly; Fr. Martin is silent on the punitive expedition; the Vadaśēri inscription is not in good condition, its date being 1697, while Nelson and Nagam Aiya assign the invasion to 1698; therefore the Maṅgammāl mentioned in the inscription "must be some humble, unknown woman and not the queen of Madura".¹ As regards the first point, Dr. K. K. Pillay rightly remarks that Nelson's search for the pieces of ordnance was made more than 150 years after the expedition.² The silence of Fr. Martin is easily explained. He says that he learnt the story of the tragedy "about two or three years before my arrival at Cotate"³ (Kōttāru, Nagercoil). It is clear that his informant gave him only the first part of the story. Regarding the date 1698 for the invasion, it is only an opinion. In my *History of the Nāyaks of Madura*, published in 1924, I say 'about 1697'.⁴ An unknown Maṅgammāl would have given details about herself, but the well-known Maṅgammāl needed none. Mr. Velu Pillai says nothing about the following statements made by Fr. Martin in his letter of 1700: "The king of Travancor.....is one of the most inconsiderable princes in India and tributary to the king of Madura. But as he never pays this tribute willingly, the Baḍagas are sometimes forced to enter his kingdom, sword in hand, in order to levy it. He yet might easily secure himself from insults, and even render his kingdom inaccessible on that side, as the Baḍagas can scarce come into it,

1. Velu Pillai, *op. cit.*, 236-38

2. K. K. Pillay, *op. cit.*, 48

3. Lockman, *op. cit.*, 370

4. *Nayaks*, 209

except by a narrow pass between mountains. Was this pass shut up by a strong wall, and a small body of troops lodged there, it would be impossible for the most powerful army to force it. This would secure Cotate, and the rest of the country, from being plundered almost yearly; otherwise it will be impossible for the king of Travancor to make head against so great a number of enemies, whom he never overcame but once (about 1696), and that by their imprudence."¹ Comment is needless. Mr. Velu Pillai overlooks the other side of the medal. Thus Barradas in the beginning of the 17th century and Peter Martin at its close state categorically that Travancore was a vassal of Madura.

1. Lockman, *op. cit.*, 367-68

CHAPTER VI

Tamiḷaham's Tolerance

THE MADURA MISSION

The Madura Mission was founded about 1592 by the Jesuit missionaries working among the Paravas with the sanction of Virappa Nāyaka (1572-95). But the people had great contempt for the Portuguese or *Paraṅgis* because they ate beef, consumed intoxicating drinks and hobnobbed with the *Paraiyas*. "Nothing can remove this disagreeable impression, neither the noble courage of the Portuguese, the magnitude of their power, the glitter of their wealth, nor the glory of their victories and conquests."¹ In short, they were regarded as vile and despicable, the basest in the world; to be called *Paraṅgis* was worse than death. They were considered as coarse, ignorant and incapable of any learning or philosophy. With the advent of Robert de Nobili, however, in 1606 a new chapter was opened in the work of the Madura Mission. His letter of 31-12-1608 refers to a violent persecution; the chief of the temple of Śokkanātha in concert with other Brāhmaṇs met in grand council to decide why it did not rain. But a great Pāḷaigar named Hermécatti patronised De Nobili, who wrote on 15th June, 1609 that the tempest raised by the Brāhmaṇs had passed but a great *Paṇḍāram* sought to raise another. In a solemn assembly of more than 800 Brāhmaṇs, charges were framed against De Nobili. The double allegiance created by conversions is brought out in the following statement of a convert. "The Nāyaka is my seignior. I shall serve him in all that pertains to the body, but in things belonging to the soul, he is not my master, and

if he orders me contrary to my salvation, I cannot obey him."¹ The year 1610 witnessed persecutions as well as the construction of a church in brick with three naves and columns of black stone, supporting a flat roof as in Italy. The theory of double allegiance is stated in Laerzio's letter of 8th December 1610: "The great Nāyaka being seignior of the whole country, all those who inhabit it, Brāhmaṇs or Rājas, are obliged to obey him in all temporal affairs."² De Nobili said: "A *Paṇḍāram* of great authority said recently that, as the arrival of Bisnagar at Madura was the ruin of the great Nāyaka, my presence in this country is the ruin of *Paṇḍārams*."³ It is said that simplicity of life was not characteristic of Madura, in contrast with that of the neighbouring provinces which contained very populous towns, and that the conversion of fifty Hindus there would cost less than that of a single one at Madura. Still the capital exercised a great influence on the whole country. Āṇḍiṣeṭṭi, favourite of the prince, was very rapacious, and the instrument of his rapine was his impudent subaltern Veṅguappa Mudaliyār, but Hermécatti Nāyaka, the valiant warrior, was the patron of the Mission. The great treasurer of the king was Periyatambi Nāyaka; Āṇḍiyappa Piḷḷai was another powerful seignior.

Vico's letter dated Madura, 1624 says that the Mission entered on a new epoch in June 1623 when De Nobili, seeing the horizon tranquil on the side of Rome, decided at last to execute his great project of planting the tree of the Gospel throughout India. One would not experience anywhere difficulties as serious as those which confronted the missionaries at Madura. Trichinopoly was the habitual residence of

1. *Ibid.*, 10

2. *Ibid.*, 67

3. *Ibid.*, 73

the Nāyaka, and the city was in a disturbed state on account of preparations for war. Śēndamaṅgalam was the capital of Rāmasandra Nāyaka, a prince tributary to the Nāyaka of Madura. Salem was the capital of Śalapatti Nāyaka, another seignior subordinate to Madura, but more powerful than Rāmasandra. Tirumaṅgala Nāyaka, elder brother of Rāmasandra, despoiled at first, then persecuted by his younger brother, was obliged to seek refuge at Salem. Vico's letter dated Madura, 1625 continues the story of Tirumaṅgala Nāyaka: at the instigation of the Brāhman, who trembled at his conversion, the king of Salem had undertaken the conquest of a province belonging to Śēndamaṅgalam; his project, said he, was to give Tirumaṅgala a part of the dominions of which he had been unjustly deprived by an unnatural brother, but it was an egregious falsehood. A plot was hatched, and on the first favourable occasion, the unhappy prince was to be deprived of his possessions and life. Deceived in the beginning by the appearances, he fell into the snare, proceeded in full security in the company of his perfidious ally, and would have perished if he had not known the secret. Informed all on a sudden, Tirumaṅgala anticipated his enemies and escaped in haste with forty servants to the territory of the king of Moramaṅgalam, about eight leagues from Salem. At last Rāmasandra, who had no children, invited his brother to participate in the war he was waging against his neighbour and offered to associate him with the government of his kingdom.

De Nobili's letter dated Madura, 1627 states that the premier Christians of Madura were obliged to follow the court or armies of the Nāyaka and their presence at Trichinopoly enabled him to organise Christianity there. Vico says in his letter dated Trichinopoly, November, 1632 that "our previous letters must have

acquainted you with the violent persecutions which, for several years and above all in 1630, have afflicted our Christianity of Trichinopoly."¹ Sebastian de Maya wrote in 1640: "This is the prison of Madura from which I am happy to write my first letter. Trichinopoly is a volcano always ready to burst out."² Vasantarāya Piḷḷai was the premier favourite of the Nāyaka. "Without an illustrious birth, this man has become all powerful at court by the influence of his sister who, a dancing-girl, has attained the dignity of the first wife of the king and exercises a tyrannical control over his mind."³ The favourite was bent on ruining Christianity. As the great Nāyaka resided at Trichinopoly, it was there that he wished to give the first signal for persecution, so that it might easily extend to the whole kingdom. Śivandi-yappa Piḷḷai was entrusted with the execution of the orders issued at Trichinopoly. Some said that the great Nāyaka, who was daily expected from Madura, wished to have the pleasure of delivering the blow himself. The missionaries thought that Vasantarāya Piḷḷai was perhaps the author of all the persecution. Balthasar da Costa visited the Nāyaka of Satyamangalam in 1643 and secured permission to preach Christianity in his dominions; the Nāyaka said in an authoritative tone that none would dare to trouble the missionaries. Da Costa's letter of 1644 notes the marvellous success of Fr. Martinz at Satyamangalam. Consequent on the persecution of 17th January, 1644 Da Costa visited the Nāyaka of Madura, who appeared fascinated by the several musical instruments of the missionaries. He dismissed them by placing on their shoulders a long veil of the texture of gold or silk, according to the custom of the kings of this country in the case of those whom

1. *Ibid.*, 263

2. *Ibid.*, 308

3. *Ibid.*, 309

they wanted particularly to honour. Encouraged by the happy success of Da Costa's visit, Fr. Alvarez was sent again to Trichinopoly, but the orders of the Nāyaka had already preceded him. Accordingly, everything stolen from the missionaries in the last persecution was restored to them quickly. Fr. Martinz visited the Nāyaka of Satyamaṅgalam who received him with honour; eight days later the prince called him again. Immediately he issued a very severe order to the governor of the province, reprimanding him for his conduct and threatening him with rigorous punishment if he dared again to interfere in the affairs of the Christians. Heaping marks of his goodwill on Fr. Martinz, he asked him to come again in a month, because he desired to hear things divine more at leisure. But in a neighbouring province, belonging to another seignior, there was persecution: "the courageous followers of Jesus Christ were robbed and threatened with death if they did not renounce their faith."¹ Da Costa's letter of 1648 refers to a severe famine, which compelled most of the inhabitants of Satyamaṅgalam to disperse in search of means of livelihood. Though the Nāyaka was always favourable to Christianity, his son and heir-apparent was young and of an unquiet and refractory disposition, surrounded by seigniors who were sworn enemies of Christianity.

The letter of Fr. Martinz dated Satyamaṅgalam, 1651 states that the missionaries of Madura were divided into two classes: some dressing like Brāhmaṇs and others like Paṇḍārams. The death of the Nāyaka of Satyamaṅgalam in 1649 created much confusion, which was exploited by the *Yōgis* who combined with the chiefs of castes against the missionaries. Towards the close of that year Fr. Martinz was expelled from the province.

But its governor, afraid of the revenues decreasing by the emigration of the Christians, took up their defence. Fr. Martinz was recalled from exile. This unexpected favour he owed to the intercession of two seigniors of the court, the most implacable enemies of Christianity! Da Costa's letter, dated Tanjore 1653, describes the people as "the most wretched race one could imagine" under a government "which is only tyranny, disorder and confusion."¹ Tirumala Nāyaka adhered to the principle of religious toleration embodied in his edict of 1644. "Our enemies are so numerous and implacable that the goodwill of the Nāyaka of Madura is not sufficient to protect us from their frequent molestation. For this reason and to be ready with a place of shelter in times of religious persecution or political warfare, we have established a church and presbytery at Candelour, a small village situated three or four leagues to the south of Trichinopoly in the midst of forests and the territory of the Kallans..... We find more security and freedom in the administration of the Paṛaiyas, far from the proud castes of the Hindus."² In 1653 a provincial governor gave the signal for persecution by arresting a Christian. Provoked beyond endurance by the resistance of the Christians, he ordered a general persecution in all the villages of his province. On the first news of violence, Fr. Alvarez went to the governor-general of Trichinopoly who administered very severe reprimands to the subordinate governor. Da Costa, then at Madura, visited the Nāyaka who received his complaints favourably and issued thundering orders against the transgressors of his edict. "We must be satisfied with this partial justice under a government as weak for good as it is strong for evil."³ In a village near Tanjore a fervent neophyte was cruelly tormented for refusing to

1. Bertrand, III, 5

2. *Ibid.*, 9-10

3. *Ibid.*, 17

participate in the Hindu festivals by offering cocoanuts and dragging the car, and a fire consumed his house, his harvest and all his fortune. The missionary of Tanjore was imprisoned in 1652, and "a provincial governor, who had imprisoned and tortured two missionaries died miserably within six months."¹

In Satyamangalam the missionaries found abundant fruits, though the climate was feverish especially from September to February, the period of innumerable maladies. The *Yōgīs* started intrigues, and their efforts contravened the justice of the Nāyaka and his goodwill which had honoured the missionaries. After his death, they thought that the moment had arrived for vengeance. They exploited the feeling of caste among the weavers. But the mother of the young Nāyaka defended the Christians. Peace was concluded and sworn to in his presence. One day when the Nāyaka with his court performed a solemn sacrifice, "a Christian, indignant at the honours given to a demon with such pomp, said to his neighbour: is it then possible that so much money is spent to honour these beasts? He alluded to the figures of animals surrounding the idols. Our enemies did not fail to convey these words to the young king, who in the first moment of his anger ordered to destroy the church and presbytery of the Christians and to expel the missionaries. But the observation that 'the *Guru* was absent' cooled the anger of the king a little. Recently the uncle of the young prince and his relations performed a solemn sacrifice to their idols. The king, regarding them with an air of pity, told a Christian who was by him: see then how stupidly these poor people spend their money."² The *Yōgīs* offered extraordinary sacrifices to terminate the drought which had desolated

1. *Ibid.*, 29

2. *Ibid.*, 35-37

the country and decided that, to appease the idols and obtain abundant rain, a village with all its inhabitants must be burnt. The prince was on the point of consenting but convinced by reasons he rejected the proposal. "These kinds of barbarous sacrifices are very frequent in these countries."¹

Proenza's letter dated Trichinopoly, 1659 mentions a recrudescence of persecution caused by the public calamities which afforded the persecutors a new and very effective argument to place before the governors. Fr. Alvarez was imprisoned but released on the orders of the governor-general of Trichinopoly. Da Costa went to Madura to address the great Nāyaka in person, but owing to the celebration of the New Moon in September, he had to wait for fifteen days. The missionaries were banished from the whole province of Trichinopoly. A new persecution began in Tanjore. The troubles of the kingdom of Satyamangalam obliged them to live in the forests. There was confusion at Candelour. The people attributed the failure of rains to the presence of the missionaries. At last the Father Superior had audience with the great Nāyaka, who received him with kindness and issued positive orders to return to the missionaries all that had been taken away from them, and to leave them in full liberty in the churches they had built and wherever they were pleased to settle. The Father was dismissed with many costly presents, and he displayed on his arms the precious clothes presented to him by the king. The rendition was effected according to his orders. These developments must have taken place between 1650 and 1659. Proenza says that Tirumala Nāyaka "loved and protected the Christian religion, whose excellence he recognised, but he never had the courage to accept the consequences of

1. *Ibid.*, 37

his conviction. The greatest obstacle to his conversion came from his two hundred wives."¹ Tirumala's intentions could not always be given full effect to owing to the strong representations of the people to their local rulers against the missionaries. Therefore his constant intervention on their behalf was necessary. A Tirumala Nāyaka wedded to religious toleration would be a rare bird in Europe in the 17th century. In Tanjore the revolutions in the palace changed the face of affairs. The two authors of the persecution (a Brāhman and a eunuch) fell into disgrace and were expelled from the court; in prison, loaded with chains, they expiated the cruelties they had meditated against the Christians. The Christianity of Satyamaṅgalam had its part in the general tribulation; the effects of the war there were even more terrible than everywhere else, because the unexpected irruption of the Mysoreans left no time for the inhabitants to save their riches. The life of the missionary was a mixture of joy and pain. The conversions during 1656-59 were 8846: 2347 in Trichinopoly; 2268 in Tanjore; 1639 in Satyamaṅgalam; 1192 in the land of Kaḷḷans and Candelour; and 1400 in Pacour.² "An event that struck the prince and the whole world was the unhappy death of the Prime Minister; in less than a month he expiated the part he had taken in the expulsion of the catechist."³

Proenza's letter of 1660 contains a comparative estimate of De Nobili and Martinz: "This church was planted by Robert de Nobili and watered by Martinz. The first was admirable for his talent in conducting the pagans to the faith; the second possessed manifold skill to conserve and fructify this faith in the neophyte..... The Christians show more respect and veneration for

1. *Ibid.*, 50

2. *Ibid.*, 76

3. *Ibid.*, 84

Nobili as a father and more confidence and love to Martinz as a mother¹.....What proves his (De Nobili) sanctity more than all his wonders is the fruit he has produced and the virtues, of which his life has only been a continual exercise. This austerity of penitence, from which he never departed, this magnanimity which rendered him superior to all dangers and sufferings; an incredible meekness which made him accept, not only on the part of the pagans but also on the part of virtuous and learned men, all kinds of contempt, accusation and infamy, without showing against them the slightest anger or bitterness, as he avowed ingenuously; a tender devotion to the holy Virgin; an ardent love of Jesus Crucified; a constant union with God in the midst of his fatigues and cares of the most dissipated life; the humility and obedience which shine in nearly all his letters and which burst out still more in all his conduct; in fine, the constant control over himself, the serenity of countenance and the affability of manners which, joined to the dignity of a high stature and to the nobility of a majestic gait, inspired the kindness and commanded a kind of veneration of all those who contacted him; that is what constituted the sanctity of this man, truly apostolic, one of the greatest missionaries of the Society of Jesus."²

Proenza's letter dated Trichinopoly, 1662 states that, after the departure of the Muhammadans, famine followed and the Kallans began to infest the whole kingdom. Consequently the missionary had to withdraw to Trichinopoly. The horrors of the scourge obliged the neophytes to spend one whole year in Satyamangalam. During this period the church and the presbytery at Sandacarei were burnt down by the

1. *Ibid.*, 106

2. *Ibid.*, 115-16

Hindus, who took vengeance on the Christians, to whom were attributed all the evils which afflicted the country. In spite of war and famine the condition of Christianity was satisfactory at Trichinopoly. "I profited by the peace to return to Trichinopoly.....Graced by the justice and good administration of the young king, we could continue our work with a liberty and peace which we would not have enjoyed if the Secretary I have mentioned at the beginning had succeeded in his ambitious projects."¹ The Hindus, especially the *Yōgis*, attempted to thwart the work of conversion. They won over the ministers of the court and lodged against the missionaries complaints so violent and calumnies so atrocious that the king felt compelled to expel them. At the moment of his departure Fr. Alvarez visited the prince as if to take leave of him and profited by the occasion to talk to him about the manner of life of the missionaries, the truths and precepts of Christianity. The king, being much impressed, wanted to hear the missionary argue with his Brāhmaṇs. After the discussion, he congratulated him on his success, desired him to remain in his church, and promised to protect him. The Christianity of Satyamaṅgalam was the most tranquil and happy of all, preserved from the devastations of war and famine.

STORY OF VALAIYAN

The caste of Valaiyan (hunter) is divided into Vēḍan (hunter), Śulundukkāran (torch-bearer) and Ambalakāran (cultivator). The story of Valaiyan, the inveterate enemy of Christianity, throws light on judicial procedure as well. Proenza's letter of 1665 says that "Trichinopoly has been all the time fecund in persecutions..... The chief of the Custom-house named Valaiyan, animated by an implacable hatred against us, resolved to annihilate Christianity and hurried to

execute his project with a skill and activity which his furor alone could equal.¹ The authority which his official position gave him, the favour of the great won by his presents, the interests of the royal treasury with which he had the art to conceal his designs: such were the strong means he had at his disposal, and with such means he could beforehand count on his triumph in a country where justice, thrown open to traffic by the avarice of princes, is weighed and sold by the weight of gold.....It does not suit in reality but a *Pradhāni* (finance minister of the king), the pearl and light of his caste (Valaiyars), so that he may deliver his parents from the rigours of indigence,².....Valaiyan appeared before the governor Śivandiyappan, the sworn enemy of Christianity and parent of the Brāhmaṇ Secretary who was cut to pieces by the order of the Nāyaka in punishment of his treachery³.....General Ādiyappa Nāyaka, whose ancestors always favoured the missionaries, was a near relation of the king, and in his absence he possessed a great authority. Ādiyappa Nāyaka, according to my wishes, summoned some magistrates to his palace and sent for Valaiyan, ordering him to substantiate his charges against me⁴.....As minister of justice, he must make an enquiry into the accusations brought against me.....The judges made Valaiyan restore my horse and reconduct me with pomp to the presbytery.....Governor Śivandiyappan cancelled the first sentence and called forth the case to his tribunal⁵.....The following night the two parties despatched couriers to the *Pradhāni* at Madura; with the title of the king's first minister, he is the governor or rather the despot of the whole kingdom.....The *Pradhāni*, without considering the complaints

1. *Ibid.*, 171

2. *Ibid.*, 172

3. *Ibid.*, 174

4. *Ibid.*, 175-76

5. *Ibid.*, 177

which the two parties had brought, one against the other, replied that my cause should be examined and that the documents of the trial should be sent to him, before proceeding to any execution.....Our patron..... decided that the examination should be public. He then sent to the governor, judges and all the great personages the order to proceed immediately to the palace; he himself went there with all the pomp he could display... A tone so decided terrified the governor¹.....He decided to reject the accusation for want of proof, added that the accuser and the accused were innocent, and concluded by condemning both to exile. The general received this absurd sentence with a smile of contempt and indignation; then, assuming an air, grave and menacing: 'I have not come here, exclaimed he, to assist in this comedy; such is not the intention, such is not the order of the *Pradhāni*. The witnesses should appear and the question should be examined in all strictness, in order to punish the guilty and acquit the innocent. I am perfectly disinterested in this affair, for I swear I have received neither present nor any promise.' Pressed so hard, the governor wished at least to attempt to intimidate the witnesses so as to oblige them to depose according to his desires.....The general, unable to control his anger, got up and addressed cutting reproaches to the governor.² All the procedure was sent to Madura, whence soon came the judgement. It proclaimed my innocence and fined the Ambalakkārars some thousands of *écus*, most of which must be paid by Valaiyan.....Valaiyan, whose hatred was increased by the shame of his defeat, hatched at the court itself new plots which must render the patronage of Ādiyappa Nāyaka useless to me. In order to anticipate and baffle his intrigues, I left for Madura and

1. *Ibid.*, 178-79

2. *Ibid.*, 180

asked for an interview. The Nāyaka, plunged in deep grief by the news of the shameful defeats which his captains had sustained in the Marava country, was not receiving any visit; I could not therefore see him, but he gave me a safe-conduct similar to that issued to us by Tirumala Nāyaka. I owe this favour to the zeal of Muttukuravappa Nāyaka, nephew of the general, who had sent him the following letter on our behalf: 'present him to the king and make him deliver a safe-conduct similar to that of the old Nāyaka.' He wrote to the same effect to his brother, to his cousin, and to his proxy. Furnished with this new royal decree, I resumed the route to Trichinopoly and presented it to the general, who hastened to proclaim it with solemnity. Therefore the pride and resentment of the governor diminished owing to his impotence. Towards the close of the year the Nāyaka returned to fix his court at Trichinopoly. The presence of a great number of seigniors and courtiers reduced the influence of Ādiyappa Nāyaka, our patron.....Valaiyan renewed his intrigues with the governor; a Brāhmaṇ of the court, buffoon of the king, joined the plot. One day when he uttered with warmth all the calumnies invented against us, the prince indignantly exclaimed that a person guilty of such crimes deserved that his ears should be clipped. These words, pronounced vaguely and without any determined intention, were understood to be a sentence, and immediately the Brāhmaṇ, accompanied by Valaiyan and an armed escort, came hurriedly to our church to execute the supposed royal sentence; happily I had just quitted the presbytery to take refuge at Candelour. The king eulogised us publicly; the Brāhmaṇ buffoon gave up his rancour against us; Valaiyan, it is true, has all the rage of hell in his heart; he has communicated to his Ambalakkārars the order to expel us and kill us wherever we could be found, but the

Valaiyars know what they have gained by becoming the instruments of his hatred.....I am told that he has been deprived of his office by a rival, who has put him in chains in order to make him render an account of his administration."¹ André Freire's letter of 1666 completes the story of Valaiyan: "The famous Valaiyan, the most enraged of our enemies, was struck even at the very moment he started new intrigues. The Nāyaka, informed of his malversations, passed against him a severe order; and this order was executed with much more rigour, because the ministers of justice had personal grudges to feed fat and offences to avenge; I don't know if he survived the torture; it is said that, coming out of the hands of the tormentors, his whole body was only a wound."²

A governor imagining that the imprisonment of Balthasar da Costa would yield him a large ransom ordered his arrest, but informed in time the missionary was able to escape. He applied to Liṅgama Nāyaka, father-in-law of the king of Madura, and secured from him two letters, one signed by Liṅgama, the other by Śinnatambi Mudaliyār, governor-general of the kingdom; they directed the commandant of Trichinopoly to treat the missionaries with benevolence and favour them to the best of his ability. The Hindu inhabitants of a village left it and sent an embassy to the sovereign of the country to acquaint him with their determination to quit his territory for ever if the new church was not destroyed soon. He however resolved to satisfy everybody by a new settlement for the Christians. A seignior of the country, jealous of the prosperity of the Christians and desirous of increasing his revenues, violated his agreement with them, and the neophytes, indignant

1. *Ibid.*, 181-83

2. *Ibid.*, 209

at his bad faith, attracted besides to their old landed property by the return of peace and the invitations of their parents, abandoned the dominions of that ungrateful and despotic prince. Satyamangalam was for long the most prosperous and peaceful of the residences of the Madura Mission. André Freire's letter of 1666 (Proenza died in that year) refers to the conversion of "a puissant seignior of Marava who enjoyed such esteem in the whole province that he was called the Captain *par excellence*,"¹ and this conversion was probably the cause of the terrible persecution of 1669, which discouraged the missionaries from going to the Marava country for about seventeen years subsequently. Fr. Erandi, without compelling any body, accepted all those who presented themselves voluntarily to become his disciples, and in doing so, he exercised the sacred right which the custom of the province accorded to all the masters of various sects.² "In the province of Marava Christianity did not dare to show itself publicly. The king of Marava had an attack of *narambu* (nerve). The Maravaprotested that he could no more agree to be treated by a Christian because his *guru* had prohibited that."³

André Freire's letter of 1676 refers to the governor of Sandama (near Jiñji) allowing full liberty to preach the Gospel. Troubles and persecutions in the kingdom of Tanjore for the past eight years led to the missionaries shifting to Nandavanam, a small bourg in the midst of the woods, south-west of the capital, on the confines of the kingdom of Madura. Fr. Almeida gained the affections of the Kallans, who defended the neophytes against the brigands of the neighbouring regions. Fr. Correa, the actual Superior of the Mission, in

1. *Ibid.*, 229

2. *Ibid.*, 238

3. *Ibid.*, 242-43

order to re-establish Tanjore as a centre, visited Ekōji, who gave him permission to settle in that town, but the enemies of Christianity, by their intrigues and calumnies, changed the mind of that prince. "The persecutions have so desolated these provinces that the Christians of Tanjore are now found in every country of India and even in Ceylon and Malacca."¹ Fr. Abreu continued to reside at Candelour, whence he governed also the Christians of the Maṛava country, where the violence of the people did not yet permit the missionaries to settle down. The courage of the brave Maṛavas was curbed neither by their fatigues nor by their privations. In consequence of the wars between Mysore and Madura, Tottiam and Congupatti were given up by the missionaries. "The war in these countries being nothing but brigandage conducted on a larger scale, its first effect is to depopulate all the country by the flight of its inhabitants."² Fr. Amadio fell into the hands of the soldiers of Mysore, but he had not much to complain against them. Fr. Abreu was obliged to go to Ambalacate for preparing an edition of the works of De Nobili. The provinces of this Mission were for long dependent on the king of Mysore, but their tranquillity was not disturbed by the wars, whose theatre was always the actual dominions of Madura. The influence of the Brāhmaṇ missionaries and the protection of the governors constituted ramparts which sheltered them against the attacks of the Hindus. The missionaries took care to maintain the benevolence of the great by some presents; recently the governor of Satyamaṅgalam was offered a bezoar stone, regarded as an infallible counter-poison. The Hindus of Coimbatore seized two Christians and attached the *liṅgam* to their neck; "the neophytes did not dare to reject this infamous idol for fear of

1. *Ibid.*, 259

2. *Ibid.*, 262

being indicted before the tribunals and punished as profaners."¹ The Portuguese Fathers were supported by the Portuguese government, which was respected even by the Nāyaka of Madura. Therefore they were safeguarded against the hatred and audacity of the Hindus, while the Father-Sannyāsīs were exposed to the most cruel persecutions of the Brāhman; they enjoyed perfect tranquillity and often received from Indian nobles flattering expressions of hypocritical benevolence. "The Indian will pay you without difficulty this false tribute of flattery and servitude; he will make prostrations to you on the ground, wholly conserving in his heart a sovereign contempt for your person and condition."² The Portuguese church at Madura began to totter; Fr. Boniface was maltreated, imprisoned and robbed of everything; the Nāyaka responded to his complaints only in vain words. But the Madura Mission, though confined at first to the kingdoms of Madura, Tanjore and Jīñji, began to penetrate into Vellore and Gōlkoṇḍa, which promised success not less abundant than Madura.

André Freire's letter of 1678 from Viraṇāmūr (Jīñji Taluk) mentions the excitement caused in the country by the wars and brigandages of Śivāji, and the disastrous inundation of 17th December, 1676. "Several Indian Christians and even women came from a distance, swimming across rivers swollen by the rains, a very suitable example to confound many Christians of Europe, to whom the fear of wetting the edge of the feet would suffice often to dispense with their duty and to deprive themselves of the happiness of attending the holy mass. It can be truly said that all the knowledge and wisdom of their pretended civilisation serve only to carry their

1. *Ibid.*, 265

2. *Ibid.*, 267

blindness to their folly in respect of their genuine welfare. Our Indians are coarse and ignorant, but when once they have known that Jesus Christ our God is really found present on our altars and in the holy Eucharist, neither mud nor rains, nor distance, nor torrents can arrest their desire to adore him and receive him in their hearts."¹ This is a tribute to the essential spirituality of the Indians in contrast with the Europeans. Travellers dreaded the molestations of employees of government who took money from all and despoiled the travellers who appeared better than the miserable ordinary people. André Freire, in order to get out of the clutches of greedy servants of government, travelled constantly on foot, mostly at night through the forests, thus exposing himself to the ferocity of tigers and wild boars. The kingdom of Tanjore was plunged in desolation owing to the hostilities between Śivāji and Ekōji. This state of trouble and persecution during the past twenty years offered no hope to the missionaries to re-establish their residence at Tanjore. The bloody struggle among the Kallans obliged the Christians to abandon their homes and wander in the woods. A minister of Trichinopoly proceeded twice with his soldiers to surprise and seize the missionaries. The arrival of Śivāji gave trouble to them. They were attacked unexpectedly by a detachment of Marāṭhās, who mistook them for Mughals and thought of taking them away as prisoners. As they did not know the language of the invaders, the missionaries made vain efforts to persuade them that they were *sannyāsīs*, not Muslims. At last one of the Marāṭhā chiefs intervened and set them free. Fr. Amadio reproached the people for their cruelty to the Christians and threatened them with the anger of God and the justice of the king of

Mysore. He proceeded to Mysore, where Fr. Michel Barbosa was very influential at court and secured full justice for his cause. He returned with a minister commissioned to execute the king's orders and punish the arrogance of the Hindus. The inundation mentioned above was followed by a general epidemic. It is abundantly clear that war and pestilence contributed more than persecution to the troubles and tribulations of the missionaries.

André Freire's letter of 1682 from Vaḍugarpaṭṭi refers to the continual harassment of missionary enterprise by the troops of Sāmbāji, who besieged the Mysoreans in the citadel of Madura. A convert was tortured by two men holding him suspended by the hair, while other tormentors administered blows with the rod. Subsequently he was taken to the governor, who reproached him for dishonouring his nobility by professing the religion of Paravas and *Paraṅgis*. Consequent on his very courageous reply, he was sentenced to impalement. On the way he had to submit to more cruel tortures and fell into a swoon. His arms were violently crossed and he was left in that position. After twenty days of martyrdom, the persecutors lost hope of conquering his firmness, marked his forehead and shoulders with red-hot iron, and drove him into exile. Divisions among the Kaḷḷans opened their woods to the officers of the Nāyaka who, under the pretext of espousing the interests of the rival chiefs, carried their ravages there. Fr. Almeida was prevented for long from residing at Nandavanam owing to the usual wars, the continual excursions of the Kaḷḷans who pillaged the armies of Ekōji, and the detachments sent by the latter to punish them. Cararampaṭṭi, south of Tanjore on the confines of the Maṛava country, was very poor because the lands there were little fertile and the seigniors

increased the misery of the inhabitants by their exactions. "However, I have never seen an arrogance more insupportable or a hatred against Christianity more blind and fanatical than in the Hindu of that country."¹ André Freire thought that the king of Tanjore, who was pre-occupied with a new war, would have no time for persecution of the Christians. Peace had been concluded between Śivāji and Uraiyan, a petty prince of the woods. The tyranny of Sāmbāji depopulated several provinces. One fine morning arrived at Vaḍugarpaṭṭi all on a sudden the news that a detachment of Muhammadan cavalry had crossed the Coleroon. It would be impossible to describe the fright of the people. In a twinkling of the eye, the crowd dispersed and left André Freire all alone. Everyone thought of saving his children and his petty treasures. The missionary hastened to conceal the most precious things in the church. The Muslims pillaged all the neighbouring villages, but did not visit the church, though subsequently it was sacked by the seignior of the province at the instigation of the Brāhmaṇs. "The troops of Sāmbāji were so rapacious that they opened the belly of the unhappy inhabitants to search for pieces of gold. This cruelty was practised especially on the Brāhmaṇs, though the Hindus would not touch them, being considered nearly divine, even if they had been convicted of the most atrocious crimes."²

Jean de Britto's letter of 1683 contains the following prefatory remarks: "It is necessary to emerge from the limits and forms of an annual letter in order to enliven and elevate its subject by geographical descriptions, pictures of manners, and some learned observations on this country; it is necessary, above all, to have more

1. *Ibid.*, 317

2. *Ibid.*, 336

talent for that than I possess; be it as it may, expecting the happy days when the missionaries, less harassed by the government, can serve the cause of knowledge by useful researches and valuable dissertations, I shall rest content with disclosing to you, according to custom, the modest picture of our apostolic labours."¹ The missionaries were "mighty magicians effecting marvellous cures."² Their enemies were so numerous and powerful in the Maṛava country that they regarded the establishment of the Gospel there as impossible. In the kingdom of Jīñji, Britto was informed by the Christians of the palace that the governor had ordered his arrest. An edict published in his province declared infamous the followers of the law of the *Paraṅgis*, ordered them to quit the towns and villages and withdraw to the suburbs, the retreats intended for the *Paṛaiyas*, and strictly forbade every Hindu to entertain them, or to touch them, or touch their money or any object which had passed through their hands, on pain of himself falling into that degradation. This was the greatest unhappiness that could menace the Indians. The principal author of this persecution died some days after, and his two wives were burnt with his corpse; "the governor himself would be very happy if he escaped the punishment of Heaven."³

The persecution in Tanjore was more violent than ever. The governor of Siroucarambour had sworn to put all the Christians to the sword, burn their church and houses, and seize their goods. The instigator of this new persecution was one Rāma Nāyaka, powerful in the country on account of his employment and especially his audacity. The governor resolved to take signal vengeance. The prince (King Uraiyar) sent me the

1. *Ibid.*, 337

2. *Ibid.*, 339

3. *Ibid.*, 341

following letter addressed to the governor: "I, great seignior, who enjoy a brilliant fortune and am commandant of the armies, accord to you, Ponna Maratan, my kind protection. You cannot be ignorant that I have in my kingdom and honour with my esteem the Sannyāsī or Seignior of all things and that, to show him my veneration, I have built a house for him, as well as for his disciples, whom I protect. I know that this Sannyāsī has likewise a house and a great number of disciples in the territory of your government; that is why I order you to treat him with such a kindness that I may be satisfied with it."¹ Without being disconcerted, the governor replied as follows: "Turning the eyes towards the places where are found the royal feet of your Seigniory and prostrating on the ground in adoration, I, your servant, have received your letter as an excellent present and I humbly reply to it: Your Seigniory favours the disciples of the Seignior of all things, because he is not informed of their criminal conduct. They are so vile and insolent that, without any respect for the most sacred laws, without any horror of the most abominable crimes, they sell their oxen to the *Paraṅgis* of Negapatam and Tranquebar, which *Paraṅgis* being a vile, infamous and barbarous race, fearing neither gods nor men, kill these oxen and eat them. The enormity of this crime is well known to your Seigniory, to whom nothing is hidden. As for the truth of the matter, it has been ascertained by my Seignior Raghu Paṇḍita who has convinced himself by the testimony of his spies, and recommended to me the extermination of this cursed race. I hope the justice of your Seigniory and his zeal for virtue will not prevent me from doing my duty; without that, oxen and cows will be killed without number and the load of

so horrible a crime will be heavy on us, and well-merited punishment will not prevent it.”¹ The governor read this letter in public and delivered it unsealed to the Christian, “who showed it to me. I took care not to send it to the prince Uraiyar because, according to custom, it also should be read publicly, what must have defamed us before the public, without mentioning the danger to which we would be exposed from the side of the prince himself. To kill an ox is so dreadful a crime that the horror it inspires takes the place of proof. Besides, how to demonstrate the innocence of the missionaries? The accuser cited his witnesses, the only kind of proof required in the tribunals of this country. Consequently I tore the letter..... Within two months the governor was ignominiously deposed. What completed his humiliation was that in an immense gathering of people, on the occasion of a solar eclipse which attracted people to a certain pilgrimage for bathing in the sea, it was reported that the king had ordered the feet and hands of the governor to be cut off as punishment for his malversations.”²

Britto was sought for by soldiers who were Līṅgāyats with orders to kill him, but they could not find him out. General Silla Nāyaka, at the head of a detachment of Mysoreans, ravaged the country and according to custom, brigandages without number marked his passage. A merchant was despoiled in broad daylight. The governor of Siroucarambour, whose rage did not yield to that of his predecessor, ordered the imprisonment of Britto and the confiscation of his goods. At this news, the Christians who were numerous assembled together and told him courageously that they were all disposed to quit the country if their *svāmī* were touched. The fear of depopulating his territory made him revoke his

1. *Ibid.*, 343

2. *Ibid.*, 343-44

orders. Fr. Payva was forced to leave the provinces of Mysore, desolated by the armies of Sāmbāji. The people of the Maṛava country were animated by such a fury that they did not cease to seek all pretexts for exterminating the thousands of neophytes who inhabited the provinces.

KILAVAN SĒTUPATI, 1674-1710

The Maṛava king, camped at the head of his army, made an ordinary sacrifice to the mother of the gods and did not fail, according to custom, to satisfy largely his devotion to the liquor of the palm, which he called piously "the milk of the goddess." The Maṛavas did not believe that they were obliged to observe the law which strictly prohibited intoxicating liquours to all the honourable castes; they took care to ennoble the name of that liquor, which the other castes called *pēyttanṇir*, the water of the devil. While the fumes of the noble milk exalted the zeal of the king, the Brāhmaṇs profited by the favourable moment to denounce the Christians, who served in the army in large numbers and exasperate his spirit against their religion. He instantly sent for one of his relations and ordered that, without delay and without exception of person, all the Christians in the army should be put to the sword. When the king became sober, the grave events which had happened in his state occupied his whole attention, and he forgot the orders given during his intoxication. "Vengeance was, as it were, a need for the haughty and ferocious character of the Maṛavas, and the usages of the country assured them impunity".¹ Several *Yōgis*, under pretext of pilgrimage, carried the sacred water of the Ganges in big vessels, at the bottom of which were found ten thousand *pagōḍas*: this was the succour which the king

1. *Ibid.*, 358

of Mysore sent to his army blockaded for one year in the fortress of Madura.¹ Such happenings also affected the missionaries as an attempt was made to arrest those *Yōgis*.

LINGA REDDI

Among the princes who were the old vassals of the Nāyaka of Madura, one of the most powerful was Līnga Reddi, in whose kingdom there was a large Christian population; Vaḍugarpaṭṭi was a great Christian centre. Though a staunch Līngāyat, he gave every facility for the spread of the Christian faith in his dominions. In 1683 the following incident alarmed its followers. When one day he visited his *guru* to pay his respects, the latter, a sworn enemy of Christianity, spoke to him as follows: "I am astonished that Your Majesty, renowned for the integrity and profundity of your judgement as well as for the justice of your government, should allow the preaching, in your dominions, of the faith of the *Parāṅgis* and *Paraiyas*, and that the priest of this faith should have a house and a church at Vaḍugarpaṭṭi, where there is an incessant concourse of immense crowds. I am astonished that you do not severely punish the temerity of this preacher who orders his disciples to break and profane the *līngam*."² The prince, struck by these words, promised to get exact information, and returning to his palace, ordered his chief minister to conduct an enquiry into the matter. He asked what the total number of Christians would be in his dominions. One of the employees of the palace replied: "Their number! ah! who could count them? They are everywhere. There is not a village where they are not found."³ The missionaries expected long the result of

1. *Ibid.*, 361

2. *Ibid.*, 371

3. *Ibid.*

the incident with anxiety, but nothing more was heard about it for more than seven months. Therefore they thought that Linga Reddi consulted his interests rather than the blind hatred of his *guru* and feared to lose one-half of his revenues in forcing a large number of his subjects to leave their country for avoiding his vexations. The comments of André Freire on the story of Linga Reddi are worthy of note: "This fact proves that if we are sufficient in numbers to profit by the happy disposition of a large number of gentiles and organise a general movement, we can in a few years consolidate the Christian religion in these countries. I dare not say that we shall give it an entire solidity, for what would be a religion established in commotion in a country whose population is floating like the waves of the sea or moving like the sands of the desert; in a country where a war, an epidemic, a famine, a political change, a foreign invasion would suffice to destroy a part of its inhabitants and change almost the whole population.....If we happen to form everywhere a respectable mass of Christians, we shall place the religion above the troubles and continual persecutions which, raised by the spirit of caste, the hatred of sects, and the interests of the Brähmans, are executed by the governors, princes and kings of the country. Consequently we shall give it stability and prepare the elements, whose divine action can conduce to conserve and spread more and more the religion of Jesus Christ throughout India."¹ What contributed much to reassure the missionaries against the efforts of that furious *guru* was the sincere friendliness of a seignior, nearest relative of the prince.

The following is Britto's appreciation of André Freire: "It does not belong to me to speak in a worthy manner of the rare virtues and glorious labours of this

1. *Ibid.*, 372-73

apostolic person and of the thousands of souls that he has converted to the faith during the twenty-seven years he has been in this Mission. Braving the sun, the rain, the winds, the pernicious dew, hunger and thirst; travelling incessantly on foot and often bare-footed across mountains, deserts and thorny woods; sleeping on the bare ground; devoting day and night to the holy ministry; governor of the whole mission, as well as of his particular district, with a wisdom and charity truly admirable; accepting with joy, as reward for so much fatigue, the happiness of being persecuted for his love of our Seignior, of having been once tortured up to the blood, several times imprisoned and more often bathed in injuries and insults; showing in all circumstances a patience and a courage above his sufferings and tribulations and this at the age of sixty years and with a constitution which was far from being robust—that is in brief the life of Fr. André Freire.”¹

The letter of Louis de Mello dated Madura, 1686 records that “the Mission has, during these three years, experienced shocks and persecutions more terrible than all those which had afflicted it till now. Proceeding in order, I shall first tell you about the persecutions in Satyamaṅgalam, Tanjore and the Maṛava country; then, I shall put in a word about the progress of religion fertilised with such tears and blood.”² A rebellion of the people in the kingdom of Mysore resulted in the invasion of the province of Satyamaṅgalam by the rebels. “After discharging their first fury on the officers of the king and many magistrates, the two generals took advantage of the occasion to vent their hatred against our neophytes and destroy Christianity..... With this object they sent a detachment of soldiers to

1. *Ibid.*, 370

2. *Ibid.*, 377

seize Fr. Benoit Noguera, who resided at Carou-mattampatti.....But.....a seignior of the country, to whom belonged Caroumattampatti and several neighbouring villages, on condition of furnishing the king of Mysore with a contingent of 500 cavalry, did not take part in the general revolt, but retired to a kind of small fort. Learning the dangerous situation of Noguera, whom he honoured with his friendship, he hastened with a part of his army to rescue him. The soldiers, repulsed by that generous prince, carried the news to their chiefs who, transported with fury, attacked the neophytes from all sides, burnt their houses and churches, and inflicted on them the most horrible cruelties. The Hindu seignior, highly indignant and not minding the advice of Noguera in favour of moderation, proceeded at the head of his troops, fell upon the rebels, killed some, made several others prisoners, and obliged them to repair the damages caused to the Christians. But this *coup de main* only increased the rage of the fanatics who, in large numbers, besieged the seignior in his fortress, to which he had returned with the missionaries. Seeing then the seriousness of the danger and the extreme inequality of the forces, Noguera sent a message to Fr. Antoine Pereira, who enjoyed the full confidence of the commandant-general of these provinces. Pereira, frightened by the news and the more alarming reports spread on purpose by the Hindus, took courage (in both hands), appeared before his friend the general and disclosed to him the state of affairs. Instantly he gave him an escort of 200 soldiers and asked him to proceed in haste and tell the besieged that he would himself come at the head of his army to chastise the audacity of the rebels. However, the siege was pushed forth with fury for twenty-five days; Noguera, to sustain the courage of the besieged, was obliged to remain day and night on the ramparts, expo-

sed to the shafts of the enemies and the continual rains; the Christians, without hope, resisting the forces so much superior, encouraged themselves mutually to die in defence of their faith and congratulated themselves on the happiness of shedding their blood for love of Jesus Christ. On his part, the Hindu seignior who had not these reasons for consolation and who could not allow himself to be slaughtered in his citadel, wished at every moment to make a sortie at the head of his brave followers and sell his life dearly; but the Father restrained him always by his prayers and by the assurance of prompt help from Providence. It is in this extremity that Pereira came to lift up the hearts by announcing the approaching arrival of the governor-general. This news spread soon in the ranks of the besiegers; and as they had more fanaticism than true bravery, this prospect of a combat with regular armies caused the fall by degrees of their exaltation and pride. Noguera seized this occasion to prevent a bloody battle and deputed to them some Christians distinguished by their nobility and experience in the management of affairs. The envoys knew very well how to talk to mutinous spirits and showed them with so much energy the extreme dangers to which they exposed themselves that peace was concluded and the siege raised. The besiegers went to other provinces in pursuit of the employees of the king, and the Christians re-entered their homes peacefully. The two missionaries hastened to Satyamangalam to offer their thanks to the governor-general. The king of Mysore, incensed by the insolence of the rebels, sent against them an army in order to put everything to fire and sword and to put the rebels to the sword without distinction of age or sex. These cruel orders were executed; the *pagōḍas* of Vishṇu and Śiva were destroyed and their immense revenues confiscated to the profit of the royal treasury. Those idolaters who

escaped the carnage fled to the mountains and forests, where they lived a miserable life. The Christians alone were spared."¹

A persecution, not less atrocious than that in Satyamaṅgalam, broke out at Tanjore. The neophytes were seen breaking the idols and trampling under foot the *lingam* which till then had been adored. The Brāhmaṇs joined together and obtained from the chief minister of the king permission to arrest all the Christians and take them to the prisons at Kumbakonam; armed men were sent throughout the kingdom to execute that order. A cruel torture followed, and the rattan-cane was used with such barbarity that the body became nothing but a wound. All neophyte-Paraiyas who were entrusted with the care of the horses and elephants of the palace withdrew at the same time, and the poor animals were not fed for several days. The king who loved them passionately was troubled. He dismissed the governor of Kumbakonam, author of all the violence, and ordered an enquiry into the whole affair promptly and according to justice. At last the Christians were permitted by public decree to live according to their religion.²

TRIBULATIONS OF BRITTO

No missionary had gone to the Maṛava country for seventeen years for fear of reviving the terrible persecution of 1669. Near Maṅgalam, Britto along with his catechists fell into the hands of the soldiers of Kumāra Pillai, commandant-general and prime minister of the king of Maṛava. They were asked to adore Śiva, and upon their refusal, the Maṛavas became furious, chained them hand and foot, bound them to the trunks of trees, and thus left them to outrage and torture. They passed a

1. *Ibid.*, 378-81

2. *Ibid.*, 381-88

full night and a part of the following day in that condition. Then they were submitted to the water ordeal as follows: the patient was raised in the air by a cord attached to his arm and passing on a pulley; then his feet were made to fall in the water of a pond or well; and if he survived, the tormentors should hold him plunged in water till he died, or he might be raised again in the air to prolong his suffering. Of the six companions of the missionary, only one, who could not resist the torment, invoked Śiva. From Maṅgalam Britto was dragged to Kālaiyārkōvil, a distance of three leagues, and there he was suspended in the air by two cords, of which one fixed to the top of a tree fastened his feet, and the other, attached to another tree, bound his hands in a manner to make his body describe an arc of the catenarian arch. After passing a long time in this torment, he was shut up with his five companions in a kind of tan-yard, whence they were transferred to a cell less narrow but dark and infested. They passed eleven days without any other food than a handful of rice all the twenty-four hours and were then, by the general's order, taken to his residence at Pagany. As soon as they appeared in his presence, he reiterated to them his command to invoke Śiva, and on their refusal, forgetting his dignity and swayed by anger, he fell on them and overwhelmed them by blows with fists and feet, and was soon followed by his courtiers. Britto presented to him the other cheek. A sentence was pronounced according to the edict against the preachers of the Gospel, viz., after cutting off the hands and feet, to impale the missionary and his catechists; as for the other younger companions, to cut off a foot, a hand, ears, nose, and tongue, and send them back in that condition to their families. A cruel flagellation made the blood flow from all the members of the body. Then, Britto was undressed and stretched on a rock bristling with

sharp ends, and eight persons trampled on him with such violence that all the asperities of the rock penetrated into his flesh. After exposure in that state to the rays of the scorching sun, he was taken back to the prison in the evening. A few days after, the tormentors came again, carrying in their hands an axe and a block, to cut off the limbs of the prisoners, and stakes to impale them. Nothing was expected except as to who should direct the torture. At the moment the general prepared to order its execution, a special messenger of the king announced that he had just discovered in his palace a conspiracy against his person and ordered him to hasten with his army. At this news, the persecutor forgot his victims and thought of nothing more than to flee to the rescue of his prince. The prisoners were ignorant of the cause of such a change and passed twenty-two days in that incertitude. At last came the order to conduct them to the court of the king at Rāmanāthapuram, and they were again obliged to travel over that route of eighteen leagues, bare-footed and with an accelerated pace. They were lodged in a stable with the horses, then shut up in a small habitation, less ignoble, but more dirty and inconvenient. The king wished to see Britto in his palace, seated him near himself and requested him to expound the law which he taught to his disciples. The general Kumāra Piḷḷai, in order to turn the discourse and lay a snare for the missionary, asked him why he would not invoke Śiva. The king said: I accord to you life and liberty, to you and to your disciples; continue to adore your God and observe His law; but as it condemns the cult of our gods, polygamy and theft, I prohibit you, on pain of death, to preach it to my subjects. Britto resolved to ask for a second audience, but his efforts were futile. Regaining his liberty, he proceeded to the Fishery Coast.¹

1. *Ibid.*, 388-93

Famine and misgovernment added to the tribulations of the missionaries. During several years famine wrought horrible ravages and legions of starving tigers left the depths of the forest. Their ferocity and audacity knew no bounds and they attacked even bands of hundred persons and carried away their first victims into the woods. The new governor of Candelour, putting his perfidy at the service of his insatiable cupidity, summoned to his palace all the principal inhabitants of the province and the chiefs of villages, who were attracted by his fine promises. As soon as he had them in his power, he sent soldiers in every direction to pillage the province and seize even the harvest; then, he set about to torment the unhappy prisoners in order to force them to disclose all the money they had hidden.¹ The Pālaigār of Moullipadi, a just and pacific man whose government conduced to the happiness of his subjects, went to Madura to salute the Nāyaka who had regained possession of that town by the expulsion of the Mysoreans. This cruel prince requited the loyalty of his vassal only by the most iniquitous tyranny; the latter was arrested in the very act of paying homage, despoiled of his jewels, and shut up in a dungeon. At the same time, his troops pillaged the dominions of the unfortunate Pālaigār, seized his wives, and tortured them to reveal the place of his hidden treasures. Indignant at such a conduct and foreseeing what could be expected from him, the Christians of the whole province unanimously resolved to abandon his territory; they left secretly at midnight with their women, children and flocks.²

1. *Ibid.*, 396-97

2. *Ibid.*, 399-400

The seignior of the town of Uṛaiyūr, near Trichinopoly, who was a near relation of the Nāyaka, permitted the erection of a church by a document signed by himself. About midnight Britto was called to the palace. On his arrival, the king descended from his seat, received the Father with extraordinary kindness and invited him to sit on his right. Encouraged by these evidences of his goodwill, Britto spoke to the prince about Christianity, the friendship with which the missionaries had been constantly honoured by the Nāyakas, his ancestors, and, above all, by Chokkanātha, his uncle. "Fear nothing, said the king interrupting him, don't talk of sufferings to undergo; it is I who am henceforth your advocate and patron."¹ He added to these flattering promises the solemn confirmation of the authorisation he had accorded to construct his church and dismissed him after heaping honours on him. The priest of the *pagōḍa* complained that he had no place to accommodate his idols: "If you know only to make them, answered the impatient prince, throw them into the river, but quit instantly the place of the *sannyāsi*,"² the piece of ground which the former had occupied unjustly. The standing quarrel between two rich Christians of Agaram was at last healed as follows by Britto: "he let fall the cloth which covered his shoulders, seized his scourge, and gave himself a bloody flagellation; immediately the two neophytes owned defeat, and from that moment they continued to live like two friends in perfect concord."³

1. *Ibid.*, 399

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*, 403-4

BRITTO'S MARTYRDOM

Britto left for Portugal in 1688, but returned to the Maṛava country in 1691, in spite of the threat offered to his life by Raghunātha or Kijavan Sētupati, and braved all the dangers which were sure to follow his persistent efforts to preach Christianity in the teeth of persecution. Not a moment passed without his encountering perils from his enemies, robbers and wild beasts. He did not trouble to protect himself from epidemics and storms, from floods and ferocious animals. He was determined not to give up his mission of sacrificing himself for the altar. He succeeded in converting a large number of people, the chief of whom was a Maṛava prince named Taḍiya Tēva, the supposed heir to the Ramnad throne, whose claims had been overlooked against those of Kijavan Sētupati. Taḍiya Tēva had five wives and several concubines, who were princesses or relations of the most noble families in the kingdom. It was necessary to repudiate them, but, reduced to the most humiliating position owing to the impossibility of re-marriage and scorned by all the world, they did not fail to take vengeance on Christianity by raising a frightful persecution. These thoughts broke the heart of the missionary, who however told Taḍiya Tēva that the law of Jesus Christ permitted only one wife. The tempest which had been foreseen did not delay in bursting out. The youngest wife of Taḍiya Tēva was the most strongly hurt. She spared at first neither tears nor entreaties to win over her husband and make him give up his resolve, but seeing her efforts futile, she became furious beyond measure. Determined to take vengeance on Britto and the Christians in general, she approached her uncle, the Sētupati, fell at his feet, moved him by her tears and lamentable cries; with a voice interrupted by sobs, she related her misfortune and implored a

striking vengeance on the infamous magician who had bewitched her husband. Coming out of the palace, she ran like a fury to the house of the chief of the Brāhman, named Pompavanam. The Sētupati ordered immediately to pillage the houses of the Christians, burn their churches, and fetch the preacher of the new law. This order was instantly executed with all rigour.¹

All the enemies of Christianity combined and prepared the mind of the Sētupati for meting out condign punishment to Britto. They pointed out that the kingdom was being ruined by the activities of the Christians and suggested that his own position might be jeopardised by the people embracing Christianity in large numbers and supporting the claims to the Ramnad throne of a Christian like Tadiya Tēva. The latter was persuaded to give up his Christian proclivities, but he gloried in his conversion. But the Sētupati was not bold enough to punish him severely, because the defect of his own title to the throne—he was the illegitimate son of the previous ruler—and the high status and influence of his rival discouraged him from precipitating any untoward developments. Therefore he resolved to heap all his vengeance on Britto, who was arrested on 8th January, 1693, brought to Ramnad, and imprisoned on the 11th. The presence of Tadiya Tēva there, as well as the existence of a large Christian population, made the attitude of the Sētupati indecisive. Britto was taken to Oraiūr, and his letter from prison dated 3rd February, 1693, mentions the events preceding his execution: "On the 28th of January I was judged and condemned to be executed in the presence of Raghu-nātha Tēva.....I was separated from the Christians and conducted to his brother Oraiūr Tēva, to whom he sent

1. *Ibid.*, 437-39

secret order to kill me without delay. I arrived here on the 31st of January.....I am expecting death with impatience; it has always been the object of my desire; it is now the most precious recompense to my work and sacrifice.....All the crime I am charged with is the teaching of the law of true God and the weaning of the worshippers from their idols.....The soldiers watch me. I cannot write more".¹ There were difficulties in the way of carrying out the order of execution as the wife of Oraiyūr Tēva was a Christian, but Murugappa Pillai, the chief minister, was an inveterate enemy of Christianity. He gave the signal for execution on the 4th February, 1693, in the following words: "Considering that this *guru* prevents the worship of our gods, and that the sect he propagates makes progress daily and spreads over the whole country, in the name of the king, I order you to cut off his head."² Britto was killed and his dead body is said to have been horribly mutilated and exposed to the vultures. Fr. Peter Martin's letter³ of 1st June, 1700, refers to the persecution of Christians, sometimes attended with personal violence. Fr. Bernard Saa was severely handled; he lost some of his teeth; his disciples were mercilessly scourged. The feelings of the people were generally excited against Christianity. Till about 1700 the Sētupati did not change his policy. Gradually the situation improved. The supposed miracles performed by the mangled remains of Britto and the death of Oraiyūr Tēva and of his chief minister shortly after the execution of Britto worked on the imagination of the people and created a favourable atmosphere for the Christians. The Sētupati himself relented and extended

1. *Ibid.*, 447

2. *Ibid.*, 448

3. Bertrand, IV, 64-65; Lockman, *op. cit.*, I, 387-88

his sympathy to the persecuted faith in his last days. While these circumstances stayed the hands of the persecutors, the cause of Christianity was reinforced by the friendly attitude towards it of Vaḍuganātha Tēva, supposed to be the Sētupati's eldest son. The missionaries were emboldened to enter the Maṛava country again, and in the first decade of the 18th century, recruits to Christianity gradually increased.

MAṄGAMMĀL THE ENLIGHTENED

While Christianity was experiencing strange vicissitudes in the Maṛava country, it enjoyed a large measure of freedom in Madura under Maṅgammāl (1689-1706). She showed great tolerance towards her Christian subjects and their priests. In 1691 she is said to have ordered the liberation of Fr. Mello, who was languishing in the Maṛava prison, awaiting death. The Sētupati became independent about 1702. In the kingdom of Madura, the missionaries had minor troubles. Fr. Bouchet dismissed three catechists for moral delinquency, and they rallied the enemies of Christianity to their side and attempted to discredit the missionaries, against whom they brought three charges: First, they were *Paraṅgis* or an infamous set of people who should be hated by the whole nation. Secondly, they were a burden to the kingdom, because they paid no revenue, though their income was large. Thirdly, they murdered a Friar of another order and consequently became odious to the Pope, who refused to canonise Britto. "Though this was a shocking and ridiculous calumny, it nevertheless was greatly to be feared, as the wretched apostates in question offered to give the prince (Daḷavāy) twenty-thousand crowns provided he would extirpate the Christians, that they at least would prevail to get all the Gospel labourers banished the kingdom, especially

Father Bouchet, against whom they had a particular spite" (Father Peter Martin's letter of December 11, 1700).¹ Fr. Bouchet, whose residence was about four leagues from Trichinopoly, the capital, grew very anxious and resolved to interview Daḷavāy Narasappaiya, though the latter was well known for his great aversion to Europeans, as was evident from his dismissing some able and experienced gunners from the army at a time when he was engaged in a dangerous war, because he had been told that they were Europeans. The missionary took with him some curious presents: "a terrestrial globe about two-foot diameter, on which the names of the several kingdoms, provinces, coasts and seas, were writ in the Tamil language; another globe, of glass, about nine inches diameter, cut within like looking-glasses; some multiplying and burning glasses; several Chinese curiosities sent him from Coromandel; many bracelets, of jet, adorned with silver; a cock made with shells, very neatly and skilfully wrought: to conclude, several common looking-glasses, and such curiosities which they had either purchased or received as presents."²

Father Bouchet was received with great consideration by the Daḷavāy, who is eulogised by Fr. Martin as "so very sagacious and equitable that he is thought to be the greatest minister that ever governed Madura."³ Bouchet, who had a minute knowledge of the court ceremonials, scrupulously avoided giving room for any suspicions about himself. He skilfully ingratiated himself into the favour of the Daḷavāy by making pointed reference to his heroic actions and victories and laid emphasis on the Christian law enjoining on subjects implicit obedience to their sovereign. "The Father

1. Lockman, I, 459-60

2. *Ibid.*, 461

3. *Ibid.*

being thus seated made his compliments. He then declared that he was come from the north, and from the mighty city of Rome, to instruct the inhabitants of this kingdom in the Supreme Being and in His Holy Law. That having been for several years a witness of his heroic actions and the many victories he had gained over his enemies, he therefore was extremely desirous of seeing so great a prince and imploring his protection in favour of his ministry. That as one of the principal Articles of the Law inculcated by him, obliged the subjects to pay the strictest obedience to their sovereign, and to be inviolably attached to them, he might be assured of his fidelity, a duty which he did not fail to recommend earnestly to all his disciples.”¹ The Daḷavāy in his turn complimented Bouchet and then conveyed his presents to the Queen, who asked her minister to thank the Father in her name and grant him all his requests: “The prince replied that the God he worshipped must be very powerful, and deserve the highest honours, since it had prompted so worthy a person to undertake so long a voyage, solely in the view of making him known to a people, who had never heard of his name. That his thin pale cheeks plainly proved him to lead a very mortified life; and that the presents he brought with him plainly showed that necessity had not forced him to quit his native country. That he had already heard the most advantageous particulars concerning his learning and good sense. That as the multiplicity of his affairs would not give him leisure to understand, in the manner he could wish, the explication of the figures drawn so artfully on the globe he had brought; he therefore had sent for the most famous astrologer in the kingdom to discourse with him upon it,

1. *Ibid.*, 463

in order that he might learn the uses of this wonderful machine. That perceiving among the presents, some things which could not fail of pleasing the Queen, he therefore would leave him a moment, and go and present them to Her Majesty with his own hand. The prince then rose up, and ordered some of his courtiers to take the Father into the garden, and keep him company till his return. The Queen, being delighted with the novelty of the presents, received them with great testimonies of joy, and commended them highly. Above all she admired the glass globe, the bracelets, and the cock wrought in shells, insomuch that she could scarce take her eyes from them. She therefore desired the Regent (Daḷavāy) to thank the foreign Doctor, in her name; to pay him every kind of honour, and to comply with all his requests."¹

The Daḷavāy openly proclaimed in court the wishes of the Queen. Bouchet expressed his indebtedness to him and took leave of him, reiterating his request for royal protection of Christianity. The interview ending, the Father was by the orders of the Daḷavāy taken in procession with great pomp throughout the city of Trichinopoly and conducted to his residence about four leagues off. This successful diplomatic mission of Bouchet strengthened his hands in dealing with the apostates who had been active against him. He published an order of excommunication, and soon two of them re-entered the Christian fold, though the third remained unrepentant. Thus the impending storm against Christianity was averted by the timely manoeuvres of Bouchet. Though Martin's account of the interview of Bouchet with Narasappaiya is an *ex parte* statement, the benevolent attitude of

1. *Ibid.*, 463-65

Maṅgammāl towards Christianity is clear. This is confirmed by the following observations of Manucci: "The first of these potentates (Queen of Madura) answered that, just as some were allowed to eat rice and others meat, so also was it lawful for each man to practise or adopt whatever religion seemed to him the best."¹ This was her answer to the suggestion of the king of Tanjore to persecute the Christians in the interests of their temples and thrones. In her attitude towards religion, Maṅgammāl shone far above her contemporaries.

1. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, III, 332-33

CHAPTER VII

Quasi-Foreign Epistolary Sources

1. INDIAN CULTS

We have seen the religious exercises of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka of Tanjore described by the missionaries: his feats of devotion, his festivals and feasts, his *gurupūjā*, his pilgrimage to Rāmēśvaram, and his performance of Tulābhāra and Hiraṇyagarbha ceremonies. There are frequent references in the Jesuit letters to the wearing of the *liṅgam*. Proenza's letter 1662 describes the cult of the goddess at Vatrapondi near Trichinopoly: "The great goddess of the village—Elamen, wife of a celebrated penitent—was chosen as the mother of Viṣṇu in one of his incarnations. While the god, under the name of Paraśurāma, condemned the insolence of some kings of Malabar, he learnt that his mother had violated the law of conjugal fidelity. Swayed by the feeling of indignation and with a desire of taking vengeance for his father, he hastened to cut off the head of that adulteress; but then touched by compassion for her who had given him birth, he brought her back to life and granted her immortality. It is this unchaste woman who is the goddess of this blind people. A terracotta statue, placed in the middle of her temple, represents her decapitated and at the farthest end of the sanctuary, a second statue shows her resuscitated and immortal. Her priests are Sakkiliyars or shoe-makers, one of the most despised castes of India. The symbol carried by her worshippers is a bit of old soles of shoes. They celebrate several festivals in her honour during the year; in the most solemn

festival, one of their chiefs immolates a lamb whose blood he sucks ; instantly he falls into a kind of intoxication, shows all the signs of demoniacal possession, and delivers oracles to all those who interrogate him.....A piece of hide is worn on the neck as a precious jewel.”¹

André Freire's letter of 1666 states that “the Cingares are a kind of Bohemians; they glorify themselves as relations of God Śiva who married a Cingare named Vaḷḷiammāl. He had by her a son called Kumāra-Svāmi, worthy of his father by the dissoluteness of his morals; he is also recognised and adored as a divinity. Vaḷḷiammāl received the same honour, and it is she who is the object of the cult of the Cingares; it is she who is invoked in their ridiculous ceremonies every time they are called upon to tell fortunes; they take care to mix her name in all their answers, and from that time they are received as so many oracles; the events which prove every day the falsity of their predictions are powerless to destroy the foolish confidence of the people which they abuse. They are sought after, feared and venerated as supernatural beings; they find in their condition comfort, honours and riches, obstacles nearly insurmountable to their conversion²..... One of these eagles Indians venerate as a divinity and give it to Viṣṇu for riding, as they assign the bull to Śiva, the dog to Vairava, the swan to Karuma, the peacock to Kumāra-Svāmi, etc. At the sight of this eagle, all the gentile infants get up and salute it, according to custom, by tapping their two cheeks and then joining the hands to show it reverence.”³

1. Bertrand, III, 130-31

2. *Ibid.*, 204

3. *Ibid.*, 206

A new sect was formed recently in the south, the god chosen being Tambikkilān, supposed to have been a washerman of the Paraiyas. His cult reduced itself to obscene dances, in which the adepts, headed by a washerman, indulged in a thousand orgies, ran through the streets torch in hand, and extorted by goodwill or violence, the offerings intended to pay the expenses of the festival. The Christians of Tinnevely refused to pay this contribution, and the sectaries under their leader ran tumultuously with a view to pillage their houses.¹

Britto's letter of 1683 gives an account of the Mahāmaham festival at Kumbakonam: "The famous festival is celebrated every twelve years on the occasion of a certain conjunction of the stars. All the gentiles of the country and even of distant countries assemble near a big tank at Kumbakonam, and at the signal given by the Brāhmins, the crowd of pilgrims plunge into the water. They enter from one side and go out by the other in order to give facility for all to take the salutary bath, which effaces all crimes and gives the right to all prosperity. The wonder of the thing consists in that, at the instant indicated, the waters of the Ganges, which flows in the north at a distance of nearly 300 leagues, come by subterranean canals to mix with that of this tank and communicate to it their divine virtue. Our Christians are very numerous at Tanjore and in the whole province..... Some had even the imprudence to mock at this ridiculous superstition. Nothing more was needed to kindle the fire of persecution. The exaltation of the festival having cooled down, we were no longer thought of."²

1. *Ibid.*, 244

2. *Ibid.*, 353

2. INDIAN CHARACTER AND LEARNING

Chivalry. Though Proenza's letter of 1659 emphasises the cowardice of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka and the susceptibility of his subjects to panic terror, it brings out the heroism of the Kshatriyas: "The *rājas* alone protested against this cowardice. These are warriors of a very noble caste, renowned for their courage. They use only the sword and the lance; they scorn the bow and the gun and leave, as they themselves say, these arms to cowards who dare not face danger closely. Their maxim is never to retreat before the enemy; to conquer or die is to them a sacred law. Faithful to this law, they threw themselves desperately amidst the conquerors and met with a glorious death, which they preferred to a dishonourable life."¹ Proenza's letter of 1665 states that "the Indian nobility, thinking it infamy to fall into the hands of these despicable beings (the Muhammadans) did not fear to seek refuge in death, less frightful, in their eyes, than such a dishonour. A large number, after slaying their women and children, plunged the sword into their own bodies and fell on their corpses. Entire populations were seen resorting to this tragic death. In other villages the inhabitants gathered together in several houses, to which they set fire and perished in the flames. A Christian woman, thus dragged into a big building to share the common fate, was recovered alive under a heap of four hundred corpses. These traits will enable you to understand how far the stubbornness of Indians goes in defending the prerogatives and honour of their castes."² In short, Indian chivalry was not monopolised by the Rajputs.

1. *Ibid.*, 512. *Ibid.*, 159

Style. Proenza's letter of 1665 gives a sample of the Indian style of writing or rather of the hyperboles of insipid sycophants: "To the divine feet of rose of the one who is the Seignior of wisdom and called Jnānēndran (Fr. Arcolini), the very happy and very excellent swan, the master of all the *sannyāsīs*, adorned with all good qualities, the doctor who imparts knowledge perfectly,— I, Ariyappaiyan, making prostration of six limbs with the submission, veneration and devotion that I have for him, I address my humble word. By the mercy of your Seigniori and the excellence of your prayers, meditations and sacrifices I enjoy good health. Have the kindness to let me know your intentions to me, your disciple. I have received the bezoar (stone antidote) which you have condescended to send me. To tell the truth, to dissipate all the poisons I have no need for this stone, since the force of your prayers and counsels and the efficacy of your protection are sufficient for me and constitute an all-powerful remedy. I know that your kind favour and glory consist in my living according to your counsels and zeal; that is why I implore you to send me your direction."¹ Proenza comments: "Those who do not know the Indian style and character will believe, in reading this letter, they see a man already wholly converted; they will be mistaken; this letter says merely that the Brāhmaṇ recognises in Fr. Arcolini a superiority which he does not dare to contest; that is much in his opinion; and all the rest is purely complimentary as a payment for the bezoar."² The same letter of Proenza states that "if one were to oppose force to their (of Indians) fury of infants, it would carry them to every excess and in their ecstasy they

1. *Ibid.*, 192

2. *Ibid.*

would be capable of letting themselves cut to pieces rather than yield; but some clever management to calm the momentary irritation would restore them to reason and to their naturally timid character.”¹

Nobility. Britto's letter of 1683 explains true nobility as follows: “A noble Hindu lived as a great seignior, that is to say, that he ate neither meat nor fish, drank only water, and bathed carefully early in the morning every day. You know these are the prerogatives and distinctive marks of the highest nobility: an exquisite cleanliness in all that is external and a purity which excludes from food all species of impure dishes and especially all having the quality of the corpse. As regards intoxicating liquors, they inspire by their effects such a horror in Indians of castes ever so little honourable, that whoever drank them would be repelled as infamous by those themselves who do not believe themselves sufficiently noble for being obliged to abstain from fish and lean meat. I do not know if many Europeans would be found who would wish to be great seigniors on that condition. It is more convenient for them to mock at the foolish prejudices of the Indian; but, without wishing to justify his poor vanity, I think that it is however something to be able to raise oneself above this gross sensuality, which puts us so near the beast.”²

Guru. In De Nobili's letter of 1608 we are told that “there are gendarmes to execute vigorously the law against those who refuse to pay their *gurus*.”³ Every one could choose his *guru* or spiritual master according

1. *Ibid.*, 195

2. *Ibid.*, 363-64

3. Bertrand, II, 17

to his inclination and submit to his direction.¹ Treachery to the *guru* was regarded as the most infamous crime.² We have seen the worship of the *guru* by Vijayarāghava Nāyaka.

Learning. Laerzio's letter of 1610 notes that the Indians paid much attention to philosophy and higher knowledge,³ that at Madura there were several colleges of Brāhmaṇs, richly founded, in which the study of Indian philosophy was very flourishing,⁴ and that the higher studies could be made only in Sanskrit on account of the fact that it lends itself admirably well to the construction of sentences.⁵ De Nobili's letter of 22nd November, 1610 gives an account of the educational organisation: "In Madura there are more than ten thousand students, distributed in different classes of two to three hundred. These students are all Brāhmaṇs, for only they have the right to apply themselves to the acquisition of higher knowledge; the other castes, especially the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras are excluded from it. In order that the students may not be distracted by the necessity of providing for their maintenance, Bisnagar and the great Nāyaka have made splendid foundations, whose revenues are sufficient for the remuneration of the masters and the subsistence of all the students. Their higher studies are divided into several courses. The first is philosophy, which is called *Sintāmaṇi*, that is to say, connection of thoughts and reasoning; it requires four or five years of study and treats, in three distinct parts, of evidence, knowledge and authority. The premier part expounds the nature, causes and the several objects of evidence; the second deals with

1. *Ibid.*, 21

2. *Ibid.*, 199

3. *Ibid.*, 72

4. *Ibid.*, 87

5. *Ibid.*, 88

reasoning, induction, syllogism and their rules and the fallacies to be avoided; the third is concerned with authority, and consequently, the word which is its instrument, signs which supplement the word, and the rule of propriety, etc. There are moreover five other courses of knowledge, besides their theology, which is called *Vēdānta* and which treats of God, His attributes, etc."¹ Vico's letter of 1622 refers to the doctrine (of a *jñāni*) having a striking analogy to the musings of the disciples of Zeno;² his letter of 1625 mentions a very learned Paṛaiya, who was a renowned master of the sublime language (Sanskrit);³ his letter of 1626 alludes to a female neophyte who astonished him by the extent of her knowledge and the solidity of her judgment; she spoke Sanskrit with elegance and facility; she cited appositely the best authors and the verses of celebrated poets; consequently he had to raise his standard to reach her height.⁴ Nobili's letter of 1627 says that a Kammālan participated in a religious disputation with a facility, eloquence and strength of reasoning, that disconcerted the most learned.⁵ André Freire's letter of 1666 mentions a public school run by a Hindu master.⁶

3. WOMEN

Vico's letter of 1620 refers to a law which obliged everyone to be attached to a single woman and to observe conjugal fidelity inviolably. Rigorous punishments were decreed against the crime of adultery, and the several rules, approved by the Nāyaka himself, were sent to the judges of common law who were responsible

1. *Ibid.*, 90-91

2. *Ibid.*, 211

3. *Ibid.*, 248

4. *Ibid.*, 257

5. *Ibid.*, 263

6. Bertrand, III, 206

for their execution.¹ It is also said that chastity was a virtue much more admired than practised by the Indians.² A master of music and dance, very skilled in his art, directed the band of dancing-girls in the ceremonies of the *pagōḍa* of Madura and in the festivals of the palace. Though they were called *Dēvadāsīs* or servants of God, they were unfortunate creatures dedicated to the shame of the most beastly passions. But their minds, much developed by the best education, showed a marvellous aptitude for understanding the truths of religion (Vico's letter of 1632).³ A dancing-girl became the chief queen.⁴ Divorce was effected by a man sending for his second wife, giving her some money, and calling her his sister, according to the custom of the country,⁵ though it is also said that "divorce is very difficult in this country because the wife is regarded as a property which the husband has the right to reclaim and recover possession of by public force" (Letter of 1648).⁶ A *Kammāḷan* "asked in a Christian family for a girl who, according to the law of his caste, was his property, because she was his cousin-german and thereby destined to become his wife."⁷

Story of Śāndāi. Proenza's letter of 1659 narrates the story of *Śāndāi*, a lady of high status, who was still more famous for the range of her knowledge, the lustre of her beauty, the charm of her voice, and her skill in dance and music. She handled her guitar with perfection. These qualities, as dangerous to herself as to others, had secured for her, with a fatal reputation, the

1. Bertrand, II, 207

2. *Ibid.*, 5

3. *Ibid.*, 289 & 291

4. *Ibid.*, 309

5. *Ibid.*, 355

6. *Ibid.*, 384

7. Bertrand, III, 68

esteem and affection of the seigniors of the country. At last, becoming the wife of the governor of the province, she lived with her relations and servants, whom she entertained with magnificence. As she was proud of her generosity, her palace became the cherished rendez-vous of Brāhmaṇs and *Yōgis*. She loved to converse with them on the sciences and books of their sects and to give them proofs of her erudition. "The penetration of her mind led her to realise the unity of God and the falsity of the idols offered for her adoration."¹ She sent her men with a letter addressed to a catechist. She soon wrote another letter, more urgent than the first. He visited the governor, who got up in his presence, received him with respect, and made him sit on a seat equal to his. The governor accorded to him full liberty to instruct his wife. She made rapid progress in a study so dear to her heart. The *Yōgis* rose upon all sides; they approached the chief minister and through him succeeded in moving the governor. But the catechist baptised her. From this moment śāṇḍāi commenced a new life. All her books, which she had till then so much loved, were thrown into the flame; her idols were broken; she ceased to frequent the temples and observe the idolatrous ceremonies and renounced the world, in which her beauty and charm had secured for her a celebrity, which was nothing more for her than a subject of tears and repentance. Her palace, which so long had been a place of pleasure and worldliness, now resembled a monastery of virgins. The neophytes from the neighbourhood regarded her as their protectress, queen and mother. Already she had put out by her influence the fire of a persecution, which was kindled in the vicinity against the Christians. She ran up to the governor, her husband, and asked his favour for her brethren. The

1. *Ibid.*, 81

governor ordered to stop the persecution. An event which struck the governor and all the world with him was the unhappy death of the chief minister: in less than one month he expiated the part he had played in the expulsion of the catechist. "Everything makes us hope that this lady (Śāndāi), who has been for so many souls an occasion for ruin, will be for a greatest number an instrument of divine mercy."¹

Manly Women. André Freire's letter of 1666 contains a reference to a woman of manly courage belonging to Tenkāṣi. "She receives the pay of soldiers in discharging all the duties and on the occasion knows how to fight with as much bravery as the most valiant warrior..... She pursues a profession little decent for her sex and very dangerous to her morals".² Britto's letter of 1683 mentions the aunt of the famous Kaḷḷan, Maikoṇḍān; she was entrusted with the government of the country, but treated as a person who had lost caste, She was obliged to eat in a corner, not on the leaves of banana but from a cup intended for dogs.³

Sati. A Muhammadan writer refers in 1628 to the seven hundred wives of the ruler of Madura who followed him on the funeral pyre.⁴ Proenza's letter of 1659 states that "the greatest obstacle to his (Tirumala Nāyaka's) conversion came from his two hundred wives, the most distinguished of whom were burnt on his funeral pile, according to the barbarous custom of these people."⁵ Another letter of the same missionary written in the same year from Trichinopoly describes the case of an ordinary woman: "One knows the custom which

1. *Ibid.*, 85

2. *Ibid.*, 234

3. *Ibid.*, 349-50

4. H. Elliot, *History of India*, VII, 139

5. Bertrand, III, 50

exists in India of burning the wives with the corpse of their husband ; and one is astonished at the heroic courage which prompts these victims of Indian fanaticism ; one will wonder less if one knows the part of the demon in these cruel ceremonies. A case of this kind came recently at Trichinopoly : A woman wished to be consumed on the funeral pyre of her husband ; her relations, desirous of saving the life of the infant in her womb, made every effort to dissuade her from it ; their prayers and entreaties were useless ; in vain the chief of the village came himself to fall at her feet and promised to take care of her till her death. Nothing could conquer her obstinacy, sustained besides by the laws of the country which forbid the employment of force for preventing these barbarous acts.”¹ Martin’s letter of 1713 refers to the *sati* of about forty-seven wives of Kijavan Sētopati, who died in 1710 and to the earlier case of Maṅgammāl’s daughter-in-law : “The Queen of Trichinopoly (Muttammāl), mother of the reigning prince, who was pregnant when her husband died about twenty years ago (twenty-four years ago in 1689) made the same resolution (to burn herself to death) as soon as a son would be born to her, and carried it out with a firmness which astonished the whole court. Her mother-in-law, Maṅgammāl, could not accompany King Chokkanātha on his pyre for the same reason, but after the delivery, she hit upon an expedient to escape the flames, the pretext being that there was none but herself to bring up the young prince and govern the kingdom during his minority. As she loved the Queen of Trichinopoly, her daughter-in-law, she wished to persuade her to follow her example ; but this young queen, regarding it with contempt, said to her : ‘Do you believe that I am so devoid of feeling as to survive

1. *Ibid.*, 95

my husband? The desire to leave him a successor has made me postpone my sacrifice; but, at present, nothing can prevent it. The young prince will lose nothing by my death, since he has a grandmother who has great attachment for life. He is as much to you as to me; rear him up and preserve the kingdom which belongs to him.' She added many more cutting reproaches, but in a veiled manner. Maṅgammāl dissembled like a sensible woman and abandoned her daughter-in-law to her deplorable infatuation."¹

Concubinage. Besides the harem, concubinage was prevalent among the people, chiefly the officials and the rich. John Nieuhoff observes (1664): "The inhabitants of those places (on the Coromandel coast)..... make but little account of their wives, but generally keep two or three harlots, by whom they have sometimes sixteen or eighteen children..... The ordinary women commonly wear painted calico, those of fashion are adorned with gold rings and bracelets when they are abroad, but are very nasty at home. They tie their hair up in a truss behind like those of Malabar, for the rest they have good features²..... The Nāyak (of Madura), to secure himself of the fidelity of his governors, detains always their wives and children in a certain castle..... about seven leagues from Madure, under the guard of 300 eunuchs; neither are the husbands permitted to see them without peculiar license from the Nāyak, and are obliged to depart again in two or three days. Some to avoid this inconvenience content themselves with harlots."³

1. Bertrand, IV, 206-7

2. *Nayaks*, 327

3. *Ibid.*, 331

4. CRIMINAL LAW

Crime. De Nobili's letter of 22nd April, 1609 states: "It is a crime for Brāhmaṇs to write the (sacred) law; they rest content with learning it by heart with an incredible fatigue during ten or twelve years continuously. My master has conquered his scruples on this point..... He wrote for me all the laws; but this must be done very secretly; if the Brāhmaṇs came to know it, the least punishment would be to pluck out his eyes."¹ Vico's letter of 1610 says: "The king of Mānāmadura, having received a box on the ear, believed that he could wash away this infamy only in his own blood..... Recently a neophyte was found exposed to die for being unable to pay a sum of forty francs."² Vico's letter of 1611 remarks that "the news of this theft spread; Hermécatti, who also professed affection for us, besides being the seignior of the quarter, said: if the money could not be recovered, it would be reimbursed by the guards of the quarter who, according to the usage of the country, were responsible for it. At the same time he sent for a very renowned magician from a great distance."³ The letter of Martinz dated 1639 refers to the Indian conviction that "it is a geat crime to destroy the house of a penitent and, above all, of a *sannyāsi* or penitent Brāhmaṇ."⁴ We have seen that adultery and betrayal of the *guru* were also regarded as crimes.

Ordeal. According to Vico's letter of 1610, the fire ordeal consisted in plunging the arm in boiling butter (ghee) or holding in hand a bar of red-hot iron, and the accused had to submit to it, according to the laws of the province.⁵ Another method is described in Proenza's

1. Bertrand, II, 34

2. *Ibid.*, 105

3. *Ibid.*, 111

4. *Ibid.*, 301

5. *Ibid.*, 98

letter of 1659: "One hand is wrapped up in cloth soaked in oil and set fire to..... The fire consumes the cloth and the hand (of Xavier) is entirely surrounded by the flames..... The hand remains as safe as if it were plunged into cold water."¹ Laerzio's letter of 1609 says that the ordeal of boiling butter was common among the Indians and that it consisted in plunging the arm or the person entirely into boiling butter, in the belief that God would intervene on the side of the truth or innocence.² Proenza's letter of 1665 gives a full account of the ordeal: "a great number of Christian weavers were esteemed for their fortune and nobility, fatal advantages which often became a source of jealousy and dispute between the Christians and the Hindus of the same caste. After putting up with the vexations of a certain gentile named Chicanen for several years, the Christians decided to make a complaint against him to the royal court. The accused, not daring to run the risk of a judgment, yielded with good grace and offered a pecuniary satisfaction; but, to conceal the shame of his defeat, he produced in his turn a complaint which was supported by a fictitious document. Seeing this the indignant Christians cried out against the falsity of the document and threw their caps at the feet of the accuser. The ordeal of boiling butter was resorted to. Papo, a Christian, withdrew his hand and showed it to the assembly as safe as it had been before the ordeal. The ministers of justice, after examining the hand carefully, wrapped it up in cloth and affixed the royal seal to it, according to custom, and conducted the Christian to the Palace..... The court of justice decided in favour of the Christians and condemned Chicanen to a fine of 150 *écus*. The latter admitted defeat and paid the fine without

1. Bertrand, III, 67

2. Bertrand, II, 18; *vide* Kaimukku (K. K. Pillay, *op. cit.*, Chapter X.)

hesitation. Then, the judges asked the Christians for a gratification from the victor. It is a sacred custom in India that in every trial the two parties should pay the court; the whole difference consists in that the vanquished pay fine and the victors pay gratification."¹

5. CASTE AND CUSTOM

Caste. The supreme judge of all the castes of the left hand was a much distinguished person, who exercised a very great authority especially in matters of religion. It was he who, on occasions of grave necessity for appeasing the gods, according to custom, by a human victim, selected the unhappy person who must be immolated at the sacrifice (Vico's letter of 1610).² The supreme reason for the Indians was the honour of their caste (Vico's letter of 1620).³ The caste of weavers was divided into two branches, and either sect had its insignia. They were animated by a mortal mutual hatred which resulted in bloody battles. A very remarkable thing was that all those who had embraced Christianity forgot their old rivalries and lived together as brethren (Da Costa's letter of 1653).⁴ The headship of the whole caste was a dignity equivalent to a kind of royalty in the opinion of the Indians (André Freire's letter of 1676).⁵ Mailangam, a small village on the Coleroon, was inhabited by Christians of the caste of hunters, who refused to submit to the arbitrary impositions of the caste of Kallans. The latter, resolved to take vengeance; organised an attack with 500 men. On their side, the hunters were prepared for a vigorous defence. They surrounded their village by a mud rampart and erected

1. Bertrand, III, 195-97

2. Bertrand, II, 100

3. *Ibid.*, 207

4. Bertrand, III, 32

5. *Ibid.*, 264

several fortifications in their manner. The garrison consisted of sixty combatants. The Kallans attempted the assault several times but were constantly repulsed with loss, and at last obliged to go back ignominiously to their woods (André Freire's letter of 1682).¹

Kallans. We have seen the activities of the Kallans of Tanjore. Fr. Peter Martin's letter of 1700 gives an account of the Kallans of Madura and Ramnad: "The first missionaries of Madura were so happy as to gain the esteem of that caste; so that, at this time, there is scarce any place in the kingdom, where we are better received, or live in greater security, than in their woods. Should any one among them, even of such as have not abandoned idolatry, be so rash as to pilfer even the least trifle from a Doctor of the Law of the True God, he would be punished for it in an exemplary manner. However, as natural disposition and inveterate habits are not easily rooted out, the Fathers oblige such as offer to become converts, to undergo a strict probation; but these, when once they are turned Christians, so far from robbing, or doing the least injury to any person, dissuade, to the utmost of their power, their countrymen from that and every other kind of villainy. This Caste of Thieves are become so powerful within these few years, that they have made themselves independent, in some measure, of the king of Madura, and by that means pay him what tribute they please. Not above two years since, the caste in question, joining with a prince who pretended a right to that crown, besieged the city of Madura, formerly the capital of this kingdom, and taking it, kept it in their possession; however they did not enjoy it for long, they being less able to defend a city in form, than to make sudden attack. The moment the Talavai (Daḷavāy), by which

1. *Ibid.*, 333-34

name the prince, who now governs the kingdom under the Queen, is called, received news of the seizing of this important place, he assembled his force; set out upon his march; arrived in the night before the city; broke open one of its gates with the assistance of three or four elephants; and entered it, with part of his forces, before the enemy had time to fortify themselves, or even to draw together. Many of the Thieves were killed in the onset, and a much greater number taken prisoners. However, the rebellious prince had the good fortune to escape, and to retire into the woods belonging to his castle, which since that time, has been much more obedient to the government."¹ Father Martin's letter of 1709 continues the story of the Kallans: "These robbers are absolute masters of this whole country, and pay no kind of tribute or tax to the prince (Marava). They come out of their forests every night, being about five or six hundred in number, and then go and plunder the habitations or villages subject to him. His endeavours to check them have hitherto proved ineffectual. About five or six years since, he marched out all his troops to oppose them, and advanced as far as their forests; when making a great havoc of these rebels he built a fortress, in which he left a strong garrison to curb them. However, they soon shook off his yoke; for, assembling together about a year after the expedition in question, they took the fortress by surprise, razed it, put all the garrison to the sword, and possessed themselves of the whole country. From that time they have been the terror of the whole district. It is said that these wretches have laid waste upwards of five hundred considerable settlements this year."² Thus this second Republic of Brigands was flourishing in 1709, while the first had come to grief by 1665.

1. Lockman, *op. cit.*, I, 452-54

2. *Ibid.*, II, 413-14

Custom. Vico's letter of 1624 notes that "according to the usages of the country, it is a present which the great believe they are obliged to make to those who visit them, and it would be a great incivility to refuse it."¹ Women in India used to weep for the death of their husbands and relations in a most noisy manner, singing various lamentations crammed with the names and stories of their gods.² Indians attached great value to the pomp of funeral ceremonies.³ André Freire's letter of 1666 mentions a Vaishṇava fanatic who felt insulted at a Christian refusing alms begged in the name of his idol and who resolved to kill himself. With all solemnity he commenced a rigorous fast for three days, then carried to the centre of a public place a heap of thorns, upon which the great sacrifice was to be consummated. At last, after taking his bath with much ceremony, he advanced, escorted by an inquisitive crowd, mounted the altar of thorns, and plunged the knife into his own throat, with the result that blood flowed in a great flood, and the victim fell.⁴ Another Vaishṇava wished to go on a long pilgrimage and asked his two sons to give him the necessary money, but they said that, in their poverty, money might be better spent in feeding and bringing up their children. Irritated by this attitude, the unnatural father addressed the tribunals of the kingdom and obliged his sons by iniquitous means to finance his pilgrimage. This conduct turned the young men against their father and the superstitions which authorised such iniquities.⁵ André Freire's letter of 1678 refers to a Brāhman, a doctor of high reputation, made famous by the signal

1. Bertrand, II, 236

2. *Ibid.*, 341

3. Bertrand, III, 171

4. *Ibid.*, 222-23

5. *Ibid.*, 231

privilege of being always preceded, even at high noon, by a lighted torch.¹ The chief of Vaḍugarpaṭṭi was blessed with a son, and to show his gratitude the happy father had the ceremonies celebrated by a Brāhman, who was specially brought from Śrīraṅgam with a pompous retinue. The ceremony was brilliant; in the midst of the sacrifices and rejoicings, the horoscope of the new-born was cast, and all kinds of temporal prosperity were promised to him as well as to his parents. But the child went to enjoy a happiness very different from that which the Brāhman had announced, according to his horoscope—he died the following night! This death changed the face of affairs, and the Brāhman quitted crest-fallen.² Britto's letter of 1683 mentions "the writing on the head" as an error common to the savants of this country: "According to them, every man carries his destiny written on his skull; all that he thinks, all that he says; and everything he does is fixed by the sacred characters in a manner so absolute and inevitable that neither Brahmā himself, nor any of their millions of gods, can stop the effect. I proved to them the absurdity of this opinion by arguments to which they knew nothing to reply."³ There was also the custom searing infants.⁴

6. MAGIC

De Nobili's letter of 1610 states that "in this country the profession of sorcerer and magician is one publicly exercised in every town or village by a crowd of ministers of Satan."⁵ Two strangers promised for a certain sum of money to change iron into silver and

1. *Ibid.*, 292

2. *Ibid.*, 293-94

3. *Ibid.*, 340

4. *Ibid.*, 347

5. Berstrand, II, 77

copper into gold. Everybody was dazzled by so brilliant a discovery (Vico's letter of 1624).¹ Laerzio's letter of 1609 says that "in this country the number of possessions (by the devil) is very considerable; it is such a common thing that none is astonished at it."² Proenza's letter of 1662 mentions "a rich village which, according to the Hindus, was infested by evil spirits that killed the animals and attacked the inhabitants with a hail of stones; those who escaped death were obliged to run away, and since that epoch this district, agreeable and fertile, was entirely abandoned. The Christians, pressed by famine and chased from their country by the wars, resolved to confront the demons, persuaded that they could not do them more evil than the men, from whose cruelty they had fled..... Now this country is one of the most populated, to the great satisfaction of its owner. This event created a sensation throughout the kingdom. There is also another case of this kind."³ Proenza's letter of 1665 refers to an army thrown into confusion by the devil at night.⁴ De Nobili says in his letter of 1609 that "in the opinion of many persons, this consecrated sandal is a preservative against the witchcraft of the demon."⁵ Proenza's letter of 1659 states that an evil spirit threw a hail of stones on houses, injured the flocks, and killed several persons. Fifteen neophytes stopped the hail of stones and other effects of the magic in all the houses, even of the Hindus, where they recited their prayers and carried their holy water, and by the same means they cured

1. *Ibid.*, 234

2. *Ibid.*, 11

3. Bertrand, III, 142-43

4. *Ibid.*, 163

5. Bertrand, II, 63

the animals attacked by sickness,¹ "A formula of prayer written on a plate of metal, holy water..... restored perfect health. The physicians of the court at Madura, witnesses of this cure, were the first to recognise and proclaim the wonder..... These cures are so numerous that a volume would be necessary to give an account of them"²—the cures effected by prayer, holy water, and consecrated ashes. Divine cure was also resorted to for serpent bite.³ André Freire's letter of 1678 states that "swarms of locusts ravaged the country and destroyed the harvest: I have seen with my own eyes fields strewn with these insects, killed by the virtue of consecrated ashes and holy water, promise a rich crop, while the neighbouring fields were completely ravaged by the scourge."⁴ Britto's letter of 1683 refers to the wonderful cures effected by the missionaries, who are described as "mighty magicians."⁵

7. HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE RECORDS OF THE MADURA MISSION

The records of the Madura Mission were composed by the Jesuit missionaries with the object of reporting on their religious activities to their superiors in Europe and of bringing to their notice the character and needs of the situation which confronted them in South India. Thus these documents owed their conception, form and guiding spirit to religion and its requirements. Though mainly and professedly religious, they throw a flood of light on the political and social conditions, because society as a whole attracted the attention of the missionaries. Several letters contain brief sketches of

1. Bertrand, III, 94-95

2. *Ibid.*, 96 & 98

3. *Ibid.*, 151

4. *Ibid.*, 276

5. *Ibid.*, 339

the political scene, apart from casual notices of it in accounts of religious activities. The history of the Tamil country in the latter half of the 17th century is particularly indebted to the Jesuit records under survey. The qualifications of the missionaries who belonged to various nationalities may be stated briefly: their extensive learning, their knowledge of the regional language, their long stay in the country, and their association with the various social strata including the Kallans qualified them eminently for accurate observation and record of the happenings in the different sectors of life. John Lockman remarks: "No men are better qualified to describe nations and countries than the Jesuits."¹ We have seen Britto's prefatory remarks to his letter of 1683 emphasising the importance of the missionaries serving the cause of knowledge by their useful researches and valuable dissertations bearing on the various aspects of Indian life.² Some of the Jesuits like Fr. Bouchet possessed high diplomatic talents, came into close touch with kings and great officers of state, and secured a favourable atmosphere for their labours in this country. Thus they gained an insight into the life of the people belonging to the upper and lower classes. Therefore their writings are bound to be a veritable mine of information in comparison with the scrappy epigraphical materials, the uncritical traditions recorded in the Mackenzie Manuscripts, and the over-laudatory court *kāvya*s, though of the historical variety. The Jesuit testimony is generally confirmed by other sources, even where it is apparently incredible as in the case of "the War of the Noses" between Mysore and Madura (1656-59). In cases of conflict of evidence, an

1. Lockman, *op. cit.*, I, p. viii

2. Bertrand, III, 337

impartial consideration of all points of view may be attempted. Therefore the Jesuit epistolary sources stand on an entirely different footing from the recorded observations of European travellers or globe-trotters on men and things Indian; they may be labelled semi-foreign or quasi-indigenous primary sources. We are consequently unable to accept the statement that "at best they can be held to be only secondary sources, though affording considerable material for the history of the 16th and 17th centuries."¹ If the most hopeful view is not taken, it is suggested that they may be regarded as tertiary sources !

The records of the Madura Mission enable us to appreciate the factors which contributed to the extinction of the Vijayanagar empire. The strange and tragic vicissitudes of the life of Śrīraṅga III are graphically described. He was a highly talented and courageous emperor who "alone could save the country" and who, undaunted by disappointments, perseveringly attempted to infuse vitality into the fast decaying imperial system. His failure is explained with reference to the attitude of the two major feudatories of the empire, Mysore and Madura. It is definitely mentioned that Mysore set the example of provincial insubordination and that her example was followed by Madura. Thus the want of concerted political action in the face of the imminent danger to South India from the southern expansion of the Deccan Muslim powers and the uncompromising spirit of provincialism which animated the policy of the chief feudatories made a Hindu empire impossible. Such a refreshing analysis of the political situation is a good commentary on the profound historical sense of the Jesuit missionaries. Special attention is given to

1. Vriddhagirisan, *op. cit.*, 5

the political fortunes of the rulers of Madura from Tirumala Nāyaka to Maṅgammāl, to the relations between Madura and her overlord, and to the decisive change in those relations during the latter half of the reign of Tirumala Nāyaka. The political storms which gathered during his last years, the more serious events in the reign of Chokkanātha Nāyaka detrimental to the integrity of the kingdom, and the restoration of the fallen fortunes under Maṅgammāl are all pictured with a wealth of detail. The affairs of the neighbouring rulers of Tanjore and Travancore, Mysore and Marava, and their relations with Madura are well described, though we may regret the constant tendency of the Jesuit writers to give highly condensed narratives on the ground that "the political events..... would make up a voluminous history,"¹ and the lacunae caused by the loss of some of their letters, which did not reach home owing to the European wars. The serious gaps are 1627-31, 1633-37, 1641-42 and 1667-75. The letters for the following 32 years are extant; 1609, 1610, 1611, 1620, 1622, 1624, 1625, 1626, 1627, 1632, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1643, 1644, 1648, 1651, 1653, 1659, 1660, 1662, 1665, 1666, 1676, 1678, 1682, 1683, 1686, 1700, 1701, 1709 and 1713, the last three throwing light on the 17th century; each of the following wrote at least four of those letters: Vico, Proenza, André Freire and Peter Martin.

A touch of realism is given to the bitter hostility between Madura and Mysore by the Jesuit account of "the War of the Noses" (1656-59), which has already been detailed. The relations between the two states about 1700 are set forth in Fr. Peter Martin's letter of 1701; Maṅgammāl (1689-1706) and Chikkadēva Rāya (1672-1704) were the respective rulers. The latter

constructed a dam across the Kāvērī and an irrigation canal to fertilise a large part of his dominions. His work was a brilliant anticipation of the Kaṇṇambādi dam of today, one of the most gigantic engineering feats of modern times, but it endangered the agricultural prosperity of the Trichinopoly and Tanjore areas. Though Maṅgammāl and Shāhji II (1685-1712) had been frequently on inimical terms, they now combined to send a punitive expedition against the king of Mysore. But Nature rendered an appeal to the sword unnecessary; unusually heavy floods destroyed the Mysore *anicut*. We have seen the importance of the Jesuit records for the beginnings of Marāṭhā power in the eastern Kaṇṇātak. These documents show clearly that religious toleration was general and persecution was exceptional. The stormy atmosphere of Ramnad under Kīlavan Sētupati did not unsettle the convictions of Maṅgammāl, who held fast to her enlightened policy by pronouncing the third great classic on religious toleration; the first and second classics were the pronouncements of Aśoka and Śivāji. The missionaries suffered more from war, famine and pestilence than from persecution. The kind and honourable treatment frequently accorded to them by Hindu sovereigns and their officers is fully and frankly acknowledged by its beneficiaries. The progress of the Madura Mission was substantially facilitated by the liberal views on religion and religious policy held with hoops of steel by the generality of Hindu potentates as an inheritance from the past. The Jesuit records prove that religion was a vital factor in Indian life, that the kings and a vast majority of their subjects venerated their religious and social institutions, and that Rajput-like heroism was exhibited at Tanjore and Trichinopoly even when the milieu was surcharged with imbecility and cowardice. André Freire in his letter of

1678 underlines the true spirituality of the rank and file of India's population in contrast with the pretended civilisation of the West devoid of spirituality or genuine culture. Britto's letter of 1683 emphasises the high place in the scale of human values to be assigned to the Indian conception of nobility, which is the elevation of man above swinish sensuality by external cleanliness and internal purity, by scrupulous avoidance of impure dishes and intoxicating liquors. Indeed the Jesuit letters are primary sources for the history of Tamilaham in the 17th century; they are above all human documents and their solid merits can sustain the strongest criticism of the data and analyses vouchsafed to us.

Before we proceed to examine the major criticisms offered by the Jesuit writers in respect of the impolicy of the rulers, their misgovernment, and their persecutive proclivity, three minor points may be mentioned: First, the Nāyaks of Madura, Tanjore and Jīñji are said to have existed "from time immemorial";¹ secondly, the immediate predecessor of a ruler is referred to as his father, even when the former was a brother as in the case of Tirumala Nāyaka or an uncle as in the case of Śrīraṅga III; thirdly, the term Mughal is indiscriminately used for all Muhammadans.

Impolicy. The Jesuit writings contain three items of criticism, viz., the impolicy of Tirumala Nāyaka, the failure of the three Nāyaks to offer a united front, and the fault of Madura and Mysore in not combining against the Muhammadans. As regards the first point, three adjectives are used: treacherous, mistaken and fatal. We are told that the unwisdom of Tirumala's policy in requisitioning

1. *Ibid.*, 41

the services of Gōlkoṇḍa and Bijāpūr brought great troubles to his kingdom and those of his neighbours. In this connection we have to note the attitude of the Jesuits towards the Muhammadans: "As for us, the hatred which these fanatics are showing to the Christians inspired in us grave misgivings."¹ It is natural that the Fathers deeply resented any serious obstacle to their work in this country, and consequently they thought that, at any cost, the Muslim advent to the scenes of their labours should be prevented in their own interests and in the interests of the people. André Freire's letter of 1678 refers to the kingdom of Madura "so powerful twenty years ago."² Therefore Tirumala's pro-Muslim policy did not emasculate his dominions. The same Father's letter of 1682 states that "in the ways and manners of the country, the conduct (viz. to join the enemy in order to fight and destroy the ally) would not have astonished anybody."³ In other words, self-interest governed political combinations, which were capable of kaleidoscopic changes. There is nothing to show that Tirumala Nāyaka wanted to commit political *harakiri*. It is doubtful if the Jesuits considered all the factors eating into the vitals of the Vijayanagar empire since the battle of Tōpūr, if not since the battle of Tālikōṭa. In fact, after Tirumala's death, his grandson Chokkanātha Nāyaka (his father reigned only for a few months) and Vijayarāghava Nāyaka were unable to cope with the political situation, in spite of the former's plan of restoring the Vijayanagar emperor, because the latter befriended the Muslims. It seems that Tirumala Nāyaka, finding it impossible

1. *Ibid.*, 119

2. *Ibid.*, 273

3. *Ibid.*, 304

to save the whole empire, attempted to save a respectable slice of it like a practical man of affairs. Secondly, the Jesuits find fault with the three Nāyaks for not combining against the common enemy, but this is only a counsel of perfection in the light of the long-standing hostility between Madura and Tanjore, resulting ultimately from the reversal of Krishṇadēva Rāya's policy of uniting the Chōla and Pāṇḍya countries by Achyuta Rāya, who favoured his brother-in-law by creating a special province at the expense of Madura. Though that satellite province under Raghunātha Nāyaka rendered yeoman service to the empire, his successor Vijayarāghava Nāyaka was a milksop who proved the truth of the dictum that man is a religious animal. Thirdly, a combination of Mysore and Madura against Sāmbāji and Ekōji would be outside the range of practical politics, particularly after "the War of the Noses." We have seen the continual hostilities between the two kingdoms from the days of Muttuvīrappa Nāyaka I. What actually happened about 1700 was a combination of Madura under Maṅgammāl and Tanjore under the Marāṭhās against Mysore to oppose Chikkadēva Rāya's dam across the Kāvērī. In short, the Jesuit records contemplate an ideal policy. Śrīraṅga III is praised in those records for his talents, courage and wisdom, though he wasted one year in "festivities, feasts and pleasures, during which the Muhammadans quietly achieved the conquest of his dominions."¹ The Jesuits had ample opportunities to know Tirumala Nāyaka, but how did they get to know Śrīraṅga III, whose character is only partially revealed in their letters, which contain no reference to him after 1662, though he lived up to 1672. André Freire's

1. *Ibid.*, 43

letter of 1676 refers to the expansion of the activities of the Madura Mission to Bisnagar and Gōlkoṇḍa,¹ four years after the death of Śrīraṅga and long after he had quitted the scene of his early activities. He started his imperial career after treachery to his uncle, Veṅkaṭa II, and after his *tête-à-tête* with Bijāpūr. His "harsh carriage" to his great feudatories is noted by the Factors of Fort St. George. His appeal to the Mughal emperor proclaims his urge for *an empire, an empire, a soul for an empire*—an unedifying spectacle, though on the whole he played a manly role. The picture of Śrīraṅga III depicted by the missionaries is fragmentary and almost one-sided, and perhaps distance lent enchantment to the view.

Misgovernment. In order to examine this charge let us attempt sufficient documentation. Vico's letter of 1611 (Madura, 30th August) describes the feudal organisation; "The king, or the great Nāyaka of Madura, has but little domains, which are directly dependent on him, that is to say, which are his property (for, in this country, the nobles are the sole owners of the land, and the people are only their farmers). All the other lands are the property of a crowd of petty princes or tributary lords; the latter have, each in his domain, the complete administration of the police and justice, if ever justice there was. They raise contributions which are at least half the produce of the lands; they divide them into three parts, the first of which is reserved as tribute to the great Nāyaka; the second part is employed for the upkeep of the troops which the lord has to furnish him with in case of war; the third belongs to the lord. The great Nāyaka of

Madura and those of Tanjore and Jijji are themselves tributaries of Bisnagar, to whom they pay or have to pay each an annual tribute of six to ten million *francs*. But they are not punctual in paying it; often they postpone the payment; sometimes they even refuse it with insolence. In that case Bisnagar comes or sends one of his generals, at the head of hundred thousand men, to make them pay all the arrears with interest. On these occasions, which are frequent, it is again the poor people who pay for the fault of their princes; all the country is devastated, and the people are plundered or massacred..... Hermécatti is tributary to the king. All the quarter of the town, a small corner of which we occupy, belongs to him. He has dominions enough to be obliged to maintain for the Nāyaka's service three thousand infantry, two hundred horses, and fifty elephants. In his capacity as owner of the quarter we inhabit, this lord, very influential at the court, could render us all the evil he would wish."¹ The letter of Martinz dated Satyamaṅgalam, 31st December, 1651 speaks of general misgovernment in India: "The death of the Nāyaka of Satyamaṅgalam and the minority of his son have made us experience the fatal consequences of bad government which exists in India in general. The idea of a monarch who regards his people as a large family, of which he is the father, never crosses the mind or heart of the Indian kings. They rather consider themselves great proprietors and their kingdom a vast farm to exploit. Full of energy and sagacity to extort from their subjects the largest amount of money possible, they are blind, negligent, and excessively weak in all that concerns good order and repression of crime and injustice. All these duties are

1. Bertrand, II, 124-25

abandoned to subordinates, chiefs of castes, and governors of provinces and villages. The latter are themselves so many petty despots, clever to make themselves independent, or maintain their despotism by intrigues or presents to satisfy the greed of those who would supervise their work."¹ The same letter states: "As the Indians are horribly miserable under their existing government, it is quite natural that they desire and hope for a more happy reign..... A woman of Vellore, born in an infamous caste, gave birth to two children; one of them is regarded as an incarnation of Vishṇu and a future liberator."² Proenza's letter of 1659 refers to the oppressions practised by the Nāyaks of Madura and Tanjore after the Bijāpūr invasion of 1648: "They only thought of oppressing their subjects..... Their arrogance seemed to conceal the degradation and meanness which had dishonoured them in riveting the yoke of their despotism on their people. Extortions and spoliations recommenced with a cruelty which made them universally regret the domination of the Moghuls."³ The same record mentions the treasures of Vijayarāghava Nāyaka, the fruits of his avarice, and describes him as a king who deserved so little of his subjects.⁴ Proenza's letter of 1662 says that the Muhammadans under Shāhji and Mulla Muhammad had occupied the kingdom of Tanjore during the past two years, but "the people were not very uneasy thereby; they sufficiently accommodated themselves to the yoke of the conqueror, in whom they found less cruelty and more justice than in their own sovereigns."⁵ André

1. *Ibid.*, 394-95

2. *Ibid.*, 398

3. Bertrand, III, 47

4. *Ibid.*, 52-53

5. *Ibid.*, 119

Freire's letter of 1666 describes the utter misrule prevailing in the kingdom of Tanjore (passage already quoted) and the exactions of the Pradhāni of Madura, who was fined "three hundred thousand *écus*. This meant to punish his subjects for crimes whose victims they had been; for the minister redoubled his cruelty to extort the sum which he had to pay to the king."¹ The same Father's letter of 1676 says that "his (Chokkanātha's) spoliations and cruelties had made the people forget the despotism of all his predecessors and excited against him the execration of his subjects;"² his letter of 1678 alludes to the constructive work of Śivāji in the eastern Kārṇāṭak and its consequences. "Such works necessarily exhausted his treasures; he compensated himself by universal pillage in the country, whose riches were hoarded in the citadels. His orders were carried out with such rigour and barbarity that most of the inhabitants sought safety in exile. Those who could not leave their homes are still groaning under this iron yoke, which makes them forget all past evils, and sighing for the arrival of the Moghuls, whom they are disposed to join to crush the new despot. Such is the state of desolation that prevails in the kingdoms of Jīñji and Vellore; I do not enter into details; words fail me to tell the horrors that we are witnessing."³ André Freire observes in his letter of 1682: "The kings of these countries cannot understand that ambition and unjust cruelty, which direct their government, are the sole cause of all the misfortunes that befall them and of the total ruin into which they are rushing blindly..... Far from profiting by their

1. *Ibid.*, 202

2. *Ibid.*, 248

3. *Ibid.*, 271-72

reverses and rectifying their faults, seeking their safety in union and in the wise administration of their kingdoms, these princes have weakened themselves by their mutual treasons, and drained the source of their wealth by a tyranny, of which nothing can give you an idea¹..... Śokkaliṅga (Chokkanātha) Nāyaka was succeeded by his son, Muttukrishṇa Nāyaka, aged fifteen. It can be imagined what kind of government would exist under a prince so young and so weak. All the country is plunged in complete anarchy and universal pillage; the enemies occupy the citadels; the Kaḷḷans are masters of the fields, villages and towns and carry on their plunderings everywhere with complete impunity. I shall say little about Tanjore; the tyranny of Ekōji continues his work of destruction there. After plundering the men, he has fallen on the *pagōḍas* of his own idols..... In the kingdom of Jīñji..... it is impossible to enumerate the exactions, brigandages and murders which desolate this poor kingdom."² Britto's letter of 1683 states: "I shall not dwell on the civil government of these countries, if, however, this name must still be given to the brigandages which desolate them..... Ekōji takes off four-fifths of all the produce..... In the kingdom of Jīñji tyranny is even more frightful and revolting. Further, this is all I shall say about it, for expression fails me to tell you how horrible it is³..... It is necessary to tell you that, in this country (the far south), the kings or governors - general, not content with sucking the blood of their subjects, leave to their subordinate officers full liberty to enrich themselves by all possible means; but this apparent conni-

1. *Ibid.*, 301-2

2. *Ibid.*, 306-7

3. *Ibid.*, 337-38

vance is only a speculation on their part. As soon as the subalterns have secured a glittering fortune, the princes fall on them and make them overflow to the benefit of the royal treasury; and this fate, which is a just punishment for those who have founded their fortune on iniquity, strikes equally those whose fortune is the fruit of their wise administration."¹ As regards administration of justice, we are told in the passages already quoted that the tribunals received gratification from the victors, while the vanquished paid fines. Thus both parties had to pay;² reason did not weigh with the courts of justice which were influenced by other considerations:³ "Justice, thrown open to traffic by the avarice of princes, is weighed and sold by the weight of gold."⁴

This gloomy picture is partly the result of the ideal standard of administration the writers had in view., viz., that the ruler should regard the state as his enlarged family. Secondly, the Pālaigār or feudal system, which was only "confusion roughly organised", satisfied the requirements of the time when it was established in the province of Madura by Ariyanātha, Daḷavāy and Pradhāni of Viśvanātha Nāyaka (1529-64). But its smooth working depended on an overlord who could constantly keep the turbulent chiefs in good humour and on the good sense of the latter. If it were to degenerate, as it did later on, it could be the most potent engine of disorder and oppression. The struggle between the emperor of Vijayanagar and his vassals liberated tensions throughout the country. In the 17th century, the Pālaigār system

1. *Ibid.*, 363

2. *Ibid.*, 197

3. *Ibid.*, 218

4. *Ibid.*, 172

declined, particularly after the death of Tirumala Nāyaka, and most of the strictures quoted above relate to the period after his death. Moreover, the political storms during the reign of Chokkanātha Nāyaka led to the utter decline and degeneracy of the system, though a different scene opened under Maṅgammāl. Therefore the bane of feudalism is reflected in the Jesuit records, but the system did not obtain in Tanjore or other areas. Thirdly, maladministration resulted also from the frequency of war, famine and pestilence.

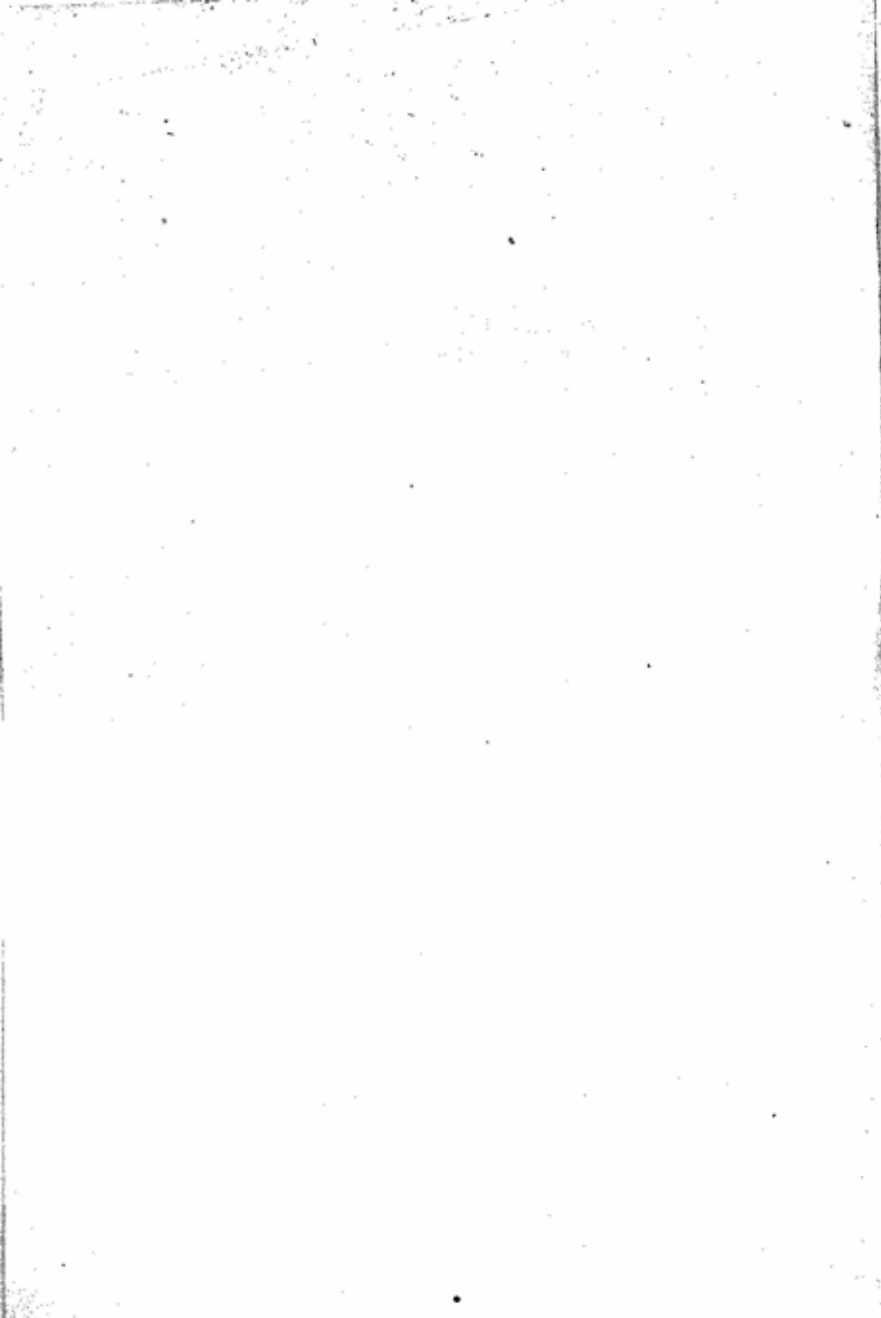
Persecution. Persecution was provoked partly by the proverbial zeal of the convert who ridiculed *vāhanas* and festivals, slighted the idols and even broke them in the presence of their worshippers and who consequently offended against the dictum of J. S. Mill that "in general, opinions contrary to those commonly received can only obtain a hearing by studied moderation of language, and the most cautious avoidance of unnecessary offence, from which they hardly ever deviate even in a slight degree without losing ground."¹ Secondly, the missionaries attacked idol worship and other characteristic features of Hinduism. Thirdly, tolerance is the first victim of war, famine and pestilence. Therefore, what is surprising is not the occurrence of persecutions now and then, but the continuance of substantial tolerance during a long period of stress and storm. Fr. Peter Martin says in his letter of 1709 that "the king of Maṛava is the only prince among all those reigning in the wide-extended Mission of Madura, who has shed the blood of the missionaries."² A rich and powerful Maṛava asked a Christian catechist:

1. J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1946), 48

2. Lockman, *op. cit.*, II, 408

"How can this religion be good and holy when our king, so full of sagacity, has put its preacher to ignominious death and severely prohibited this doctrine in his dominions?"¹ The drastic step taken by Kīlavan Sētupati was the offspring of his belief that the safety of his crown and the interests of his kingdom demanded such a policy. Like Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (A. D. 161-80), the Sētupati felt it to be his duty to persecute Christianity. His is an exceptional case; he could not repress the surging wave of Hindu feeling produced by the damaging attacks of Britto on idol worship and Hinduism in general. Both Marcus Aurelius and Raghunātha Sētupati blundered because of their ignorance of the modern theory of liberty. But, on the whole, Tamiḷaham showed tolerance, which is not only the life-blood of politics and the cement of social solidarity, but also the soul of religion and culture.

1. Bertrand, III, 453



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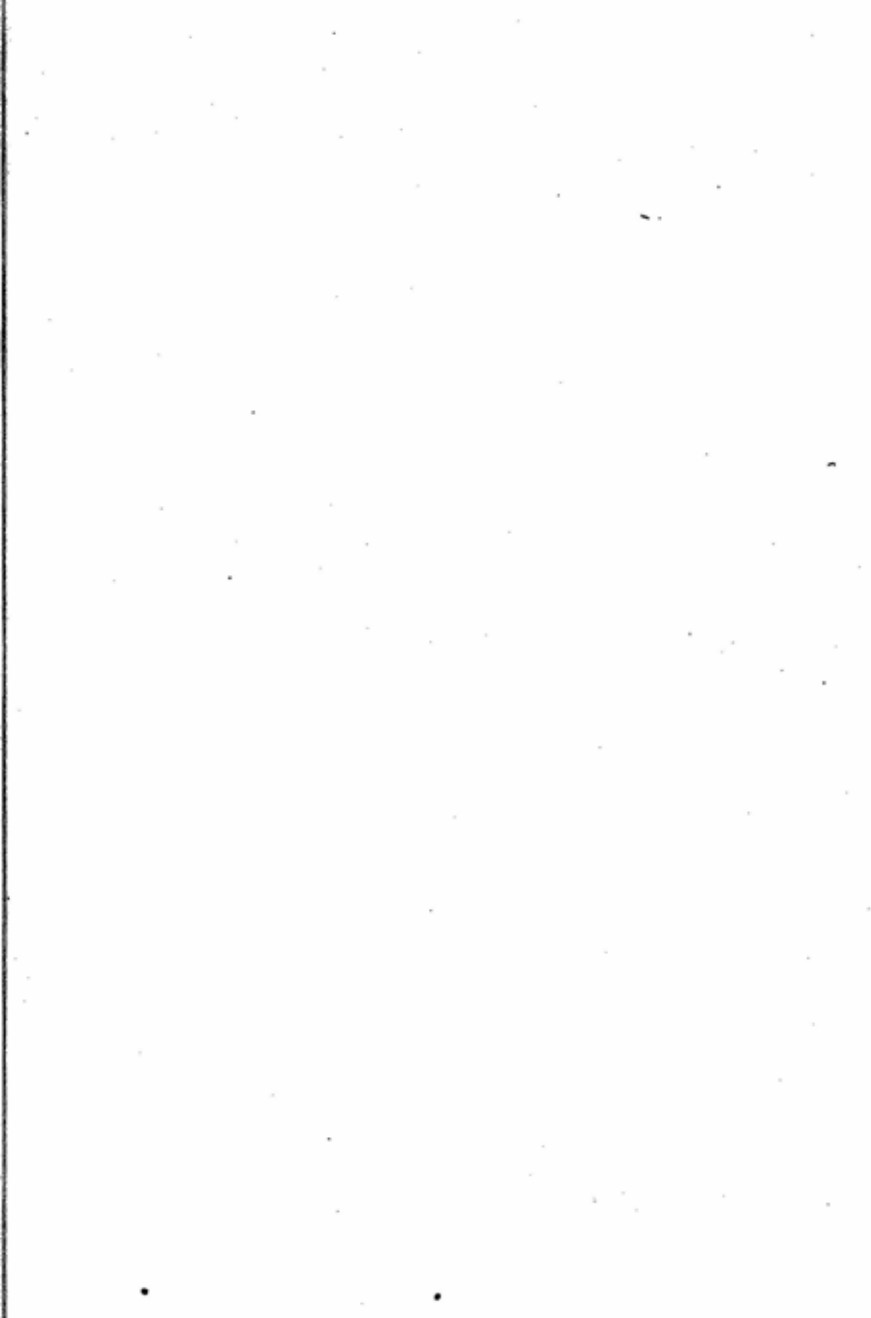
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